

+ CHRISTIANS ☾
UNDER THE CRESCENT IN ASIA



S. W. Pettitwell
184. Benbrook

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A GROUP OF NESTORIANS OF THE TYARI TRIBE.

Their Names, beginning on the spectator's right hand, in the sitting group, are Rabban Yonan, Kasha (= Priest) Khames, Malek Daniel, Malek Gonri, Hoshana; in the standing group, Adam, Kasha Gewerhes (George), Kasha Dimchar, Kasha Hosana, Johannan, Batou. (*From a Photograph.*)

CHRISTIANS
UNDER THE CRESCENT
IN ASIA.

BY THE

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CHRISTIANS UNDER THE CRESCENT IN ASIA.

INTRODUCTION.

UNTIL the year 1834 the Nestorian Christians inhabiting the mountains of Koordistan were almost unknown to us; they were surrounded on all sides by independent Koordish tribes, whose fierce temper and lawless habits made their country inaccessible to the European traveller. In the year above mentioned, the Turkish Government established its sovereignty over all these tribes, both Koordish and Nestorian. In the following year, 1835, the Euphrates Valley Expedition gave Englishmen access to them; and the publications of the members of that expedition excited in England an interest in the remnant of the ancient Christianity of the further East, which had so long lingered, isolated and disregarded, in the midst of its mountain fastnesses. The result was that the Royal Geographical Society and the Christian Knowledge Society concurred, in 1838, in sending Messrs. Ainsworth and Rassam on a special mission to Koordistan. The narrative of their journey was published by Mr. Ainsworth in two volumes of "Travels and Researches in Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Chaldæa, and Armenia."

These gentlemen also presented a special report to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in which they

stated that the Patriarch Mar Shimoon and others of the Nestorian bishops and clergy were anxious to have a clergyman of the Church of England sent out to assist them in the education and improvement of their people.

This led to a further enterprise with a more definite religious aim. Two great mission societies—the Christian Knowledge and the Propagation of the Gospel Societies—agreed to send, under the sanction of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, an English clergyman and an assistant on a special mission to the Nestorians of Chaldaea and Koordistan. The Rev. G. P. Badger and Mr. J. P. Fletcher were selected and sent out in 1842. They remained in the country about a year. All regular missionary work was interrupted by the fact that during the time of their mission a Koordish chief had made an attack upon the Nestorian tribes, had destroyed churches and villages, massacred many of the people, and driven the Patriarch and the rest to seek safety in flight. The protection of the English missionaries proved the salvation of the Nestorians from utter destruction; the representations of the English diplomatic authorities induced the Turkish Government to interpose, and Bedr Khan Beg was banished to the island of Cyprus.

After having been a year among the Nestorians Mr. Badger and Mr. Fletcher were withdrawn by the societies, to the great grief of the Nestorians. Two or three extracts from the letters of Mar Shimoon at the time will best express the feeling of the Nestorians on the subject.

“Through your deputy (Mr. Badger) we have learned with certainty that there still remains in the West a Holy Church independent and free from the corruptions of the See of Rome, which is the mother of error, with a priesthood derived from the apostles, a right doctrine respecting the Holy Sacraments, as well as a primitive ritual.

“I entreat you, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you do not reject this our petition, seeing that it is

not a great thing with you that you should continue to us the presbyter George Badger to assist us, and because the whole is for the glory of God and for the welfare of men. Nor can I think that this is a hard matter to a nation holding the true faith, and which sends forth so many messengers among the people and brethren, so that in you is accomplished the saying of the Psalmist, 'Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the end of the world.' Is it not a small matter to such a nation to give up one person to those who are in so much need of his assistance?

"And again we repeat our supplication that you turn not your face away from our request, which is but a little one, but made to a great people and a blessed Church. For, behold, the messengers of the Pope are as spies among us, and are using every species of intrigue to get an opportunity of entering into our country, in order to deceive the hearts of the simple; and these come to us without our asking them; and do you wish to go far from us—you towards whom we have a cordial will?"*

Notwithstanding these urgent entreaties, Dr. Badger was withdrawn.

From that day to this occasional appeals have come from the Nestorians praying for English help. In 1868 a formal petition, chiefly from that portion of the Nestorian people which is located in the plain of Oroomiah, reached the late Archbishop of Canterbury, and he had put forth an appeal to the Church of England based upon it, when his death put an end for the time to any further action. We put this letter on record here as the fullest recent expression of the feelings of the Nestorians, and as the appeal which ultimately gave rise to the mission of inquiry to the Nestorians narrated in the following pages.

"This petition to be delivered into the hands of the Reverend, Catholic, Orthodox, and Benevolent Fathers;

* Dr. Badger's "Nestorians and their Rituals," i., 291, 293, 295.

the beloved and blessed and illustrious, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of the Metropolitan City of London, in peace and prosperity. Amen.

“May it be honoured and graciously received by their saintly and pure hands !

“To the most reverend and zealous Fathers, the elect of the Holy Ghost, set as watchmen over the rich pastures of the heavenly Lamb, the dispensers of spiritual streams to all who thirst after the truth, whose resplendent beams are diffused throughout the world, whose pure doctrine has watered the once barren lands, whose light, like that of the morning star, has shone upon the dark places of the earth, the comforters of the afflicted and sorrowing, the sun of the present generation, the meridian of our time, the holy ministers, elect primates, orthodox patriarchs, watchful shepherds, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Right Reverend the Bishop of London, who follow after the life of the Crucified One which leads to heaven, and who dwell in perfect peace and security within the dominions of her glorious Majesty, the most excellent Queen Victoria :

“We desire to represent to you our abject condition, our spiritual destitution, and our lack of the means of instruction, trusting that you may condescend to listen to the appeal, and to relieve our necessities for Christ’s sake. In so doing, we take the liberty of submitting to you the four principal causes which have reduced our community to its present low condition, and which, moreover, threaten its existence.

“First, you are undoubtedly well acquainted with the past history of our community. At the beginning it was highly flourishing, its boughs were vigorous, its leaves green, its fruits delectable. Even from the time when Nestorius was persecuted it sent forth its branches into the far East, because it was planted by the watercourses. It continued to prosper for many generations, sending forth branches far and wide. At length the wild boar, in

the form of the first Mohammed, lopped off some of its branches—for he dealt it a severe blow—and thereby arrested its growth ; then it fell into the clutches of another wild boar, and the two conjointly, viz., the Eastern Mohammed, who assailed it in front, and the Western Mohammed—that is, the Pope—who assailed it from behind left it prostrate. The former devoured its outward substance, and the latter its internal economy, and both gloated over its misery. Thus our community fell from one depth into a lower deep, its numbers decreasing at every fall, until but a small portion of it survives. Moreover, the rulers who govern us are corrupt, and by their careless administration foster violence and oppression. The judges, too, treat the daughters of our people wrongfully. Plunder is committed with impunity ; robbers steal, and no one dares to remonstrate ; outrage is perpetrated, and the criminals are allowed to escape ; felony is rife on the highways, and the felons are screened ; evil-doers bear sway throughout the land, and no one ventures to resist them. To such an abject condition has oppression reduced our people that the living among us are led to envy the unmolested dead. As to the Mohammed of the West, through the agency of his crafty emissaries he deceives the ignorant of our community, promising them protection if they will but join their Church. The illiterate fall an easy prey to their wiles, not knowing that these men are whited sepulchres. Moreover, when the aforesaid missionaries see any of our poor oppressed by the tax-gatherer, they come forward to aid them by way of charity ; others they indirectly cause to be oppressed in order that they may relieve them ; their object in both cases being to induce them to become Papists. Such is the line of their policy towards our unfortunate and unprotected community.

“ The second cause of our present abject condition is the spiritual ignorance prevailing among our people. * * *

In fact the clergy and laity are on a par as regards spiritual matters, all apparently walking in the road to perdition. Our eyes wax dim when we thus contemplate the sad estate of the daughter of our people, and unless, in paternal sympathy, you come to our relief, no remnant of us will be left, and we shall be like Sodom and Gomorrah.

“The third cause is the deplorable decay of learning among us. Our ancient books have been destroyed, and we have no scribes or printing presses to replace them, no schools wherein to educate our youth. Our old seminaries have either been taken from us, or have become the resort of the vain and the wicked. The learned have perished from amongst us, and no students are rising up to fill their places. * * * Alas for the bruise of the daughter of my people! Truly the summer and harvest are past, and we are not saved. Hasten, we implore you, to our rescue.

“The fourth cause is our isolated and forlorn condition. The people of Israel, after a captivity of seventy years, were restored to their own land; but our captivity has lasted 700 years, and yet no one has remembered us; and now we would lift up our eyes unto the hills, hoping that help may come. But if we look to the hills of Russia, we discover that they are covered with images and idols; if to those of Rome, we see [the Western] Mohammed holding sway there; if to those of America, the prospect does not suit our views, neither is it adapted to our wants. For the Americans have been labouring among our people in Persia for the last thirty-five years, and yet not one of the people has been able hitherto to write a simple commentary on any portion of the sacred Scriptures. Our people, moreover, are not well affected towards their peculiar tenets. But in looking to England we are all of one mind, and find comfort and hope in the anticipation of receiving succour from the great City of London.

Hence we implore the Lord Jesus Christ, and cast ourselves at your feet who are His disciples, beseeching you to compassionate the condition of our people, who are wandering over our mountains like sheep without a shepherd, and send us some of your missionaries and preachers to guide us in the way of life; for verily we have all gone astray, each one following his own devices, through our utter lack of pastors, instructors, and counsellors. We are in the condition of fatherless and motherless orphans. We are persecuted and have cried aloud for help, but no one has come to comfort us. Woe unto us, for we have erred and are benighted! Therefore we beseech you, O Fathers, to save us from the all-devouring sea which surrounds us—deliver us from its overwhelming billows, and rescue us from the fierce storms which threaten our destruction.

“Having thus set before you a summary of our melancholy condition, we earnestly trust that you will not fail to come to our assistance, and will not stand aloof from your disconsolate brethren, who are on the brink of ruin. The harvest truly is abundant, but we are destitute of a single labourer. Our hope in Christ is that He may implant sympathy in your hearts towards us, and move you to send spiritual labourers to us from your Church, which is endowed with riches and knowledge. For our hearts are pained and our sight is dimmed through bewailing the miseries of our Zion, tossed to and fro by the raging waves, and devastated by voracious wolves. But Thou, O Lord, who art eternal, and whose throne is everlasting, be not angry with us, neither cast us off for ever. We deserve Thy chastisements; nevertheless, in Thy manifold mercy, haste to deliver us.

“Finally, we pray you, holy Fathers, to pardon the liberty which the undersigned—the suppliants of your spiritual aid—have taken in submitting the foregoing statement of their deplorable condition to your gracious consideration.

“Sealed with the seals of the following Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons, and Laymen :—

“The Bishop of Gâwar, the Bishop of El Akri, the Bishop of Doorî.

“*Of the District of Tehooma*—Presbyters Hoshâna, Hoshâna, Shimôn, Lachin, Eliazar, Hoo-shaba, Ghwerghis, Israel, Yelda, Toobâna, Yelda, Sleewa, Yohannân, Yeshua, Sleewa, Hurmuzd, and Yonân; Deacons Binjâmin Dâvid, Matlub, and Ghwerghis.

“*Of the District of Deirî*—Presbyters Hoshâna, Hurmuzd, Abrahâm, Ishâk, Schleimûn, Yohannân, and Khamis.

“*Of the District of Tyâri*—Presbyters Habsûn Bezza, and Ghwerghis; Deacons Ismail, Nuroño, Hoshâna, and Khamis; Meleks Khushâba and Jebbo.

“*Of the District of Gâwar*—Presbyter Khamis; Deacon Tammo.

“*Of the District of Akri*—Presbyter Dâvid; Deacon Yosep.

“*Of the District of Doorî*—Presbyters Tôma and Yohannân.

“*Of the District of Jelu*—Melek Ahrûn; Deacons Suleimûn and Dakhyd.

“*Of the District of Bâz*—Meleks Abd-Yeshua' and Simûn.

“*Of the District of Rikani*—Presbyters Khammo and Yelda.”

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York were minded to respond to these persistent supplications, but it seemed to them that more definite information was needed of the actual state of the Nestorian Christians, and of the way in which help could be most usefully given them. Their Graces thereupon, in the spring of 1876, commissioned

the writer of the following pages to visit the Nestorians, and bring back such information as was set forth in a detailed paper of instructions.

A report of the results of the visit addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury has been printed by his Grace's order, and circulated among the members of the two societies—the Christian Knowledge and the Propagation of the Gospel Societies—which put at his Grace's disposal funds sufficient to defray the cost of the expedition. It was, however, thought that a fuller account of the incidents of the journey, of the nature of the country, and of the manners and customs of the people, than could properly be included in a formal report directed to certain limited questions, would be generally interesting, and would serve the purpose of eliciting a wider sympathy and aid for the plans which the Archbishops have undertaken on behalf of this interesting people.



A STREET IN CAIRO.
(From a Photograph.)

CHAPTER I.

LONDON TO CAIRO.

WE started on our journey "from Kentish Town to Koordistan" on the 26th of April, 1876. Our party consisted of three persons—myself, my son, who is distinguished in the narrative by the initial W., and a Nestorian, Deacon George, who had been in England two years, and who now returned home in our company and acted as interpreter. Our route was from London to Paris, Paris to Marseilles, Marseilles to Alexandria. I pass over this part of our journey. The reader has taken up the book as one of Eastern travel, and it is hardly fair to delay him with a preliminary chapter of European touring. Yet this chapter was full of interest to us. The railway journey right across France, with a few days at Marseilles—a miniature Paris with a more beautiful climate; the view of the Bay of Naples, and a few hours' run over the town; the Straits of Messina, with a view of snow-crowned Etna; the distant length of Crete; the pleasant idleness of the voyage—pleasant to one who had been working hard in a large London parish for some years; all this formed a very agreeable preparation for the more novel scenes and the harder work which lay before us.

On Wednesday, the 10th of May, we came in sight of Alexandria. First we saw something on the horizon like the funnel of a steamer—as we came nearer it was seen to be a lighthouse; then, on the right, a line of palm-trees and windmills with eight sails each, and a forest of masts on the left, were visible over an horizon of sea; lastly, the

line of low, sandy coast rose into sight. The Arab pilot boarded us, and before we had finished admiring this first-fruits of the East in his baggy purple trousers and jacket and red fez, we found ourselves inside the harbour. Then the touters of the hotel came on board, twenty or thirty of them, struggling with one another to get at us; shouting at us and at one another—at us cajoleries in broken English, at one another vituperations in Arabic. Landed, we plunged at once into the midst of Eastern life. I knew that a man's first day in the East was a day of wonders, but I was not prepared for its great interest—books and pictures and photographs do not prepare one for the reality. The picturesque streets with their overhanging balconies, the palms and acacias and cacti, form the background of a series of pictures. The pictures are composed of the most wonderful mixture of races and costumes. Here is a big athletic Nubian in a long robe and turban, which look snowy white in contrast with his ebony skin; there an Arab in his coarse short linen tunic and abbai, and his head covered with a kefiyeh bound with a rope of camel's hair; a Turk in plum colour; a native woman covered with a blue mantle, and veiled so that only her eyes are visible; a European lady in the latest (but one) Paris fashion; a crowd of labouring men in blue dresses; and traders in European coat and trousers and fez. But to single out a figure here and there and try to describe it does not give an idea of the vast variety of costume and the novelty and brilliancy of the scene, as the numerous people pass to and fro in continually new combinations, in the brilliant sunlight or the cool shadows of the streets. It was like a page out of the "Arabian Nights."

Pompey's Pillar, sole relic of the great Temple of Serapis, and Cleopatra's Needle, were enough to set us musing over the eventful history of the city which once ranked second only to Rome among the cities of the world.

The steamer made a stay of three days at Alexandria ; we took advantage of the opportunity to run up to Cairo. If a railway journey across a country has its disadvantages, it has also its advantages. It does not limit you to the high-roads and the towns, it carries you right across country and shows you a sample of everything. It carried us on this occasion across the vast level of the Delta, marked at first by barren sandy soil, with palm-trees and huge cacti, and gleams of lake and canal ; then by attempts at cultivation, with thin, parched crops which do not seem worth reaping. At length we find the whole land cultivated. For long distances the view is not unlike flat parts of England, *e.g.*, about Peterborough or Ely, only every now and then a group of palms or a mud village reminds one that it is Egypt. The first sight of an Egyptian village ! A group of mud huts, some square, about seven or eight feet high, with a heap of litter piled on the top by way of thatch ; only a door, no window ; some round-roofed with a flat dome, which carries a cowl-shaped chimney ; no yard, or garden, or enclosure. A village is a group of a dozen or twenty of these huts dropped down anyhow in the middle of the open country. It is the colour of them—the same colour as the soil they stand on—which makes much of their strangeness and wretchedness. In larger villages we saw some houses two stories high, and here and there a threshing-floor outside the village, where the oxen dragged a rude chair round and round over the straw, just as they did three thousand years ago. In some better-looking villages the houses were placed with some degree of regularity, so as to form an outer wall, with a gate into the street. The towns had a greater number of two-story houses, some of them whitewashed externally, with gardens, as if they might belong to Europeans.

Sometimes the railway ran for a distance alongside a high-road, on which we watched the travellers as we steamed along. There is a man in a long blue robo

sitting gravely astride a donkey, while his wife, muffled up to the eyes, follows, also astride a donkey; there is a stalwart fellow walking along at an easy swinging pace with a long walking-staff. And, see, there is the first camel! and there an Arab woman with her boy astride on her shoulder, holding on by her head. When tired of looking at the landscape there was abundant interest in our fellow-passengers in the long second-class carriage. In the furthest compartment is a young native woman, with her husband and a female servant; she is veiled to the eyes, and at first kept her face completely concealed, while her dark eyes flashed and sparkled with excitement as she looked at the passengers and chattered to her companions. Presently she lighted a cigarette, and had to draw her veil a little aside, with slender henna-stained fingers, every time she applied it to her lips; this was evidently a trouble, so at last, to smoke at her ease, she took off her veil altogether, and all the charm vanished with it—she was not pretty at all!

A Turk got in at one of the road-side stations with his little son. He soon found sitting like a European uncomfortable, so he took off his yellow slippers, tucked his feet under him on the seat, and made himself comfortable. He was a big fellow in a white silk under-vest and saffron silk tunic, and light chocolate over-robe, the colours beautiful and beautifully harmonised. He untied his bundle and ate his supper, he and his boy; then the boy made cigarettes for his father to smoke, and made them with a dexterity which revealed long practice, while the father took out his beads and played with them now and then between the whiffs of smoke.

We missed the proper station for refreshment, or we should have bought a piece of bread and a roast quail each, and torn them to pieces with our fingers like other people, and had water poured on our hands to wash them; but I had understood that there was a buffet at the next

station, where I assumed that we should alight and lunch *à la Franga*; the result of our mistake was that we went foodless and hungry, except for oranges, which could be bought everywhere.

At length the sun went down, and the short twilight was soon over; the stars came out one by one large and bright, and beginning to feel weary and hungry, I tried to doze; then the collector came round for tickets, and in a few minutes more we were at Cairo. A carriage whirled us over a broad European-looking "Place," through a fairly broad street partially roofed overhead, and pulled up at the entrance to a narrow lane, which seemed to plunge down into a labyrinth of back slums. A lamp at the corner of the lane, however, bore the inscription "*Hôtel du Nil*," and assured us that our driver was right, so, having only hand-bags to carry, we dismissed our carriage and plunged into the abyss. After some distance and several turnings we found our lane terminated at the gate of the hotel. We entered and found ourselves in a quadrangle planted with palm, and accacia, and cactus, and flowering plants, surrounded by the apartments of the hotel, with the dinner-table under a broad verandah lighted by coloured lamps. In another moment we found ourselves in presence of a courteous host, who promised us a late dinner by the time we had washed off the dust of our travel, and kept his promise handsomely.

By the time dinner was over the moon had risen over the one-story east side of the quadrangle, and was shining among the palms and climbing plants; the air was still and balmy, and we sat late into the night enjoying the beauty of the climate and the scene.

Thursday, May 11.—Next morning early—for we had short time and much to see—we mounted our donkeys (they are the Hansom cabs of Cairo), and went out to see some of the principal mosques and the citadel. I shall not attempt to describe them. We had only time for a

leisurely glance at general effects and no time to study details. The view from the corner of the citadel garden was very fine ; the city with its domes and minarets lay below ; then the Nile, and beyond it the Pyramids of Gizeli and Sakhara looking small in the distance. Returning we went through the bazaars—a labyrinth of narrow alleys roofed overhead, lined with shops, all the shops of a trade being together ; the silk bazaar in one place and the copper bazaar in another ; the carpet bazaar, the silver, the gold, the rose, the grocery bazaars, all in separate quarters. Each shop is a small chamber, say six feet frontage, and a little deeper from back to front, with an open arched front, the shopkeeper seated cross-legged in the middle of his shop with his goods before, beside, and behind him, all within his reach, smoking placidly and waiting for his customers, or sometimes lying along the bench in front of his shop asleep. The narrow alleys were crowded with people—black, brown, and white—French, Turk, Greek, Egyptian, Arab, Negro, Copt, in all sorts of costumes, the majority on foot, but many on donkeys, and now and then a loaded camel stalked along with his head on a level with one's face—a weird-looking head, with hanging lips—grinding his food as he went, with a motion of the lower jaw alternately from right to left and from left to right, and eyes full of an expression of long-suffering remonstrance. So we passed slowly on through one bazaar after another, our donkey sais shouting to make way for us through the crowd—a yielding, good-natured crowd, which did not offer the slightest rudeness, and did not even stare at us as much as I should have expected, for we must ourselves have formed a remarkable part of the motley crowd—an English clergyman in his usual costume with a wide-brimmed felt hat and puggaree ; a young Englishman with fair complexion and light hair, in a grey morning suit with a pith helmet ; and a Persian with black curly hair and beard, in Frank

costume terminating in a straw hat. I am sure that all Kentish Town would have laughed to see us gravely mounted on donkeys and gently working our way through the Cairo bazaars.

"Hallo! here's a row!" a lad had got hold of an old fellow by his grey beard, and was tugging at it, screaming and gesticulating, while the old man was trying to get away. A crowd filled up the street about them. What had the old man been doing? Trying to pilfer, perhaps; his submission to the ill-treatment seemed to indicate that he was in the wrong. "Make way for the Effendis!" shouts the donkey sais, and the three gentlemen above described gently push their donkeys through the crowd, while the old fellow takes advantage of his opportunity and slips off.

We emerge again from the bazaars into the Mouski, the High Street of Cairo, and amuse ourselves by looking at the buildings and the passengers, the houses, with stone or plastered lower story, overhanging upper stories of timber, and projecting windows with carved lattices, and now and then a mosque or a fountain. We are getting accustomed to the variety of costume, and only something new particularly attracts the attention. There goes a grave-looking elderly gentleman on a white mule—"ye that ride on white asses." Most of the carriages have running footmen, who run a little ahead of the horses with a long white stick, and cry out to clear the way, as Elijah girded up his loins and ran like a running footman before Ahab's chariot to his palace at Jezreel. Here comes a funeral. A number of men walk first, then comes the body, which seems to be that of a child; a boy walks beside it; a number of women follow, all joining in a monotonous chant. We stand aside to let the procession pass; our donkey sais joins in the chant, and continues it for some little while after we have resumed our way.

Here is a Greek or Armenian Papa in his black robes and peculiar hat and rosary. Here a lady in a delicate

rose-coloured silk dress under her black outer robe. There a woman riding on a donkey with very short stirrups. There ! just in time to see a wedding party of ladies in French costume get out of a carriage in a by-street, the bride in orthodox white silk, the negro boy who has acted as running footman in a new white smock for the occasion. An officer rides past on a well-bred horse. And so on and on, with no end to the succession of characters and the variety of grouping.

But soon other characteristics of the scene begin to force themselves upon us : the great number of people who are partially or wholly blind ; the number who are maimed or disfigured ; the apparent poverty and wretchedness of many.

Tinkle, tinkle, clash ! It is the water-carrier jingling his little brass dishes. He carries the water in a great jar at his back, with a shade of green boughs to keep off the sun ; a long tin pipe projects over his shoulder, and he pours the water out by a dexterous stoop forward. Here is a man watering the roads, with the water in a goat-skin at his back ; he uses the skin of one leg as a spout, and jerks the water to right and left over the road ; if he did not, the road would soon be ankle-deep in dust, and the incessant traffic would fill the air with such clouds as to make the street unendurable ; as it is, the street is converted into a kind of Rotten Row, and the wheels glide and hoofs prance over it inaudibly.

“ Black your shoes, sir ? ”

“ Want a good donkey, master ? ”

“ Caroché, sir ? ”

So the boys salute you at every corner as you get into the French quarter, the new town of Cairo. Whenever you are tired, or if you should by chance lose your way, a very easy thing to do in the labyrinthine bazaars, jump on the first donkey you see, and tell the sais, “ Hôtel du Nil,” and you will soon find yourself threading the narrow lane which leads to it, and will not be sorry, after a long

morning's sight-seeing, to find that you are just in time to wash off the dust and sit down to *déjeuner* at the orthodox hour of 12.30.

I wasted the afternoon in trying to hunt up the Consul-General, to whom I had letters of introduction, and found at last that he was in Alexandria. Strolling out after dinner, we saw the way in which the shops are protected from robbers. Before the door of many of them lies a little wicker frame, on which a rug is laid, and a watchman lies there all night. Every now and then one of them raises a cry of "Allah il Allah!" or something of the kind; the cry is taken up by the others, and they make so loud a cry, and so frequently, that strangers are often prevented from sleeping by it. At the "Hôtel du Nil" we are so far from the main streets that last night we did not hear the cry at all. We saw one of these watchmen kneeling on his mat with his hands on his knees, saying his prayers with apparent devoutness, no one except ourselves thinking it a strange procedure.

After the matutinal cup of coffee and roll, we started soon after seven in a carriage for the Pyramids of Gizeh. Therein we made two mistakes—we ought to have started an hour earlier, and we ought to have taken a more substantial breakfast. It is a drive of about an hour and a half, or thereabout, through Ismailia (the new quarter of the city), across the Nile by a tubular suspension bridge, and across a cultivated plain, up to the edge of the desert. The Pyramids are a little within the edge of the desert; behind them are low sand-hills, beyond the hills the Sahara. Standing as they do in a vast plain, with nothing near by which to measure them, they do not look to the eye so huge as we know they are, and it is only gradually that we come to realise their size.

We were at once surrounded by a group of Arabs, wild-looking fellows, crowding round us, screaming and gesticulating with very unnecessary excitement, for there is a

regular Pyramid tariff—2s. each for the ascent, and 2s. for the interior—but it is the Arab nature to try to get something more than the tariff. I don't know that they are really much more greedy than other people who live on tourists, but they certainly make more noise over it. At length, with the assistance of the driver of the carriage, who had been supplied us by the landlord of the hotel, and who acted as a sort of dragoman on our behalf, and by refusing to negotiate with anybody but the sheik, we got the preliminaries arranged, and started. Each of us had a body-guard of four Arabs, one to take hold of each hand and pull him up the gigantic steps, with a third to give a push from behind at the extra high steps, and a boy with a water-bottle. The ascent was really hard work, because of the height of the steps and the intense heat, but it was perfectly safe, and, with the assistance of the Arabs, there was no real difficulty about it. From the top we looked over an interminable tract of desert on one side, and on the other over the fertile plain watered by the Nile; the five Pyramids of Sakhâra northward, groves of palms, lines of canal, Arab villages, &c., &c.; the smaller Pyramid close by, the Sphinx down below, the foundations of the Temple, and traces of tombs all round. In the hollows between the low hills of the desert the sand had flowed down like streams of water. It was touched with a delicate greenish bloom. After a long look all round we descended, and found the descent quite as fatiguing as the ascent; but the two Arabs, one on each side, broke one's descent, like coach springs, and saved the human machine the jerks of an unassisted jump and the danger of a fall. The one thing we had to complain of was that at every pause of ascent the Arabs were pestering one with eager solicitations for additional backshish. The tariff price went to the sheik and was divided among all the men of the tribe, they said, and what was that among so many? I promised them an additional backshish; but then at every pause of

the descent they were pestering one to pay it before we got down, lest, they said, the sheik should take it from them; while I felt it safer to retain a hold upon them until their services were completed. Once down, my muscles were so much strained by the unusual exertion, and the heat was so oppressive, and I was so disgusted by the importunities of the Arabs for additional backshish, that I declined the descent into the interior; so we got the sheik to keep his men off while we went quietly to look at the Sphinx, and lay on the warm sand to study it. Everybody knows it from photographs, everybody differs as to the expression of the features. It gave me the impression of a blank stony stare, with which it has gazed over the Nile valley since the dawn of human history, and witnessed the rise and fall of dynasties, and the lives and deaths of generations of men, with the same passionless regard. In reality the absence of the nose so defaces the features that it is hard to tell what the expression originally was.

The heat was intense and oppressive; it seemed to parch all the moisture out of one; one was continually drinking; the sweet Nile water out of the cool, porous goolleh (water-bottle) was delicious, but the draught only gave a momentary relief. A pleasant drive back brought us to our hotel in time for breakfast. In the afternoon a khamsine (hot wind) began to blow. There was summer lightning in the evening and a slight shower. There were two showers of rain at Cairo last winter; so that it does rain in Egypt, though seldom.

On Saturday, May 13, we returned to Alexandria and re-embarked.

On Sunday, May 14, we found ourselves at Port Said, where the steamer remained all day, and we stayed quietly on board of her. It was a cloudy morning, with a good deal of rain, and the temperature rather cold; it might have been an English April day. In the afternoon the weather cleared up, the sun came out, and it was hot.

CHAPTER II.

THE COAST OF SYRIA.

ON Monday, May 15, we reached Jaffa, where the steamer remained all day. From the sea the town presents the appearance of a rounded hill covered with houses rising one above another. Reefs of rock stretch out in front of the town, so that the steamer has to lie outside, and the passengers land in shore-boats. In rough weather the landing must be very hazardous work; even with tolerably smooth water we found the swell hurling itself with heavy blows against the reef, and the clumsy boat had to be carefully navigated through a narrow opening in the barrier. Inside there is a little harbour of smooth water, and a narrow quay at the foot of the town wall, itself protected by a second low wall and towers. Bad as the harbour is, it has always served as the port of Jerusalem. Jonah sailed out of this little harbour when he fled from the Lord. The cedar beams which Hiram sent for the building of the Temple were landed on that narrow quay. It was very provoking to be a whole day within so short a distance (about thirty miles) of Jerusalem, and not to be able to go up to the Holy City. We had to content ourselves with wandering through Jaffa, and taking a walk among the orange groves in its neighbourhood. The town has considerable interest. The houses are well built of hewn stone, with balconies projecting on corbels. Round and pointed arches abound and vaulted passages, and the narrow streets are very picturesque. Near the mosque, at the north end of the town, is a little square, surrounded by

a colonnaded cloister; in the middle a fountain under a dome, making a very charming picture. Beside the fountain lie two tall capitals, with a double row of acanthus-shaped leaves, the relics of some ancient building of considerable architectural pretensions. The bazaars lie about this square, and though small in size, are very picturesque. Underlying the mediæval wall at the north side of the town we observed some traces of masonry of much larger stones and of earlier date. A large piece of the wall on the north-east has been broken down quite recently, but the remainder of the old fortifications—so far as we saw them on the north and the west (sea) side—are perfect and full of interest.

We walked out into the country northwards, through gardens and orange groves; called at a farm-house, and bought some oranges which were gathered for us off the trees; but I suppose they were out of season, for they were thick-skinned and woolly.

The house which is called that of Simon the Tanner is built of large stones like those we observed on the north wall of the town, and is clearly of earlier date than the surrounding houses, and is still surrounded by tanneries; and if not actually the house where Peter lodged and saw the eventful vision, it is probably the same kind of house, and near, if not upon its site. It serves to help us to realise vividly the scene and surroundings of the history.

There was a good deal of bustle in the town; the bazaars were full of people, the streets with strings of asses and camels. A cargo of goods was being loaded on camels on the quay; I watched the loading of one. The men had got twenty planks on one side of the pack-saddle—they were only short planks, but they looked like a heavy load—and they were proceeding to balance them on the other side, when the camel, who had previously remonstrated with guttural noises, and threatened with sharp turns of his long neck and vicious snaps at the projecting portions

of his tormentors' bodies, at last fairly struck, got up from his knees, and threw off the unbalanced load. The men took it very quietly ; they did not beat the camel, or even indulge in the usual screaming and gesticulation, but proceeded quietly to get the camel into position again, and to replace his load. Perhaps their conscience whispered that the poor beast had sufficient reason for his rebellion. We did not wait to see the end of it.

Tuesday, May 16.—We arrived off Beyrout, and cast anchor in the roadstead. The town rises from the water's edge up the side of a hill. The eye ranged over a wide extent of country, and the Lebanon range, with its sides streaked with snow, formed the background of a very striking picture. As we were to stay here all day, we landed to see the town and to make some inquiries. The massacre of the consuls at Salonica had occurred, a squadron of British men-of-war was at anchor in the roadstead, the whole country was in agitation, and we needed good advice as to our future proceedings. The consul referred us to the American missionaries. The missionaries advised us that we might venture to proceed, notwithstanding the agitation, feeling our way carefully as we went ; but a more real danger, they told us, was that we were late in the season for travelling across the country, and they impressed upon us that it was only by taking the greatest care, travelling by easy stages, with plenty of good food, plenty of sleep, no fatigue, and no exposure to the sun, that we could hope to escape the fever of the country.

The town is large and thriving, with many modern houses and several good hotels. We got some luncheon at Bassoul's Oriental Hotel, and found a rather large party of tourists there, who, however, were at the end of their tours. Acting on the advice of the American missionaries, we bought here two tents—the large tent lined, and with a canvas screen stretched over the roof, with an interval

between to make it less pervious to the heat of the sun. We also went into the bazaar, and laid in some stores for our journey.

We went on board again in time for dinner, but the steamer lay at anchor till midnight. It was a charming evening. We lounged on deck, and watched the changing appearances of the Lebanon under the changing light. When the sun had set, and the mountain was nothing but a mass of purple on the horizon, we turned to admire the town, whose numerous lights had all the effect of a gay illumination. The lights of the men-of-war in the bay, the distant sound of their band, a shore-boat rowing about with music in it, the stars shining large and brilliant all over the sky, the coolness of the air after the hot day, made up a most enjoyable evening.

Wednesday, May 17.—We woke about five, and found ourselves stationary off Tripoli. The town is in the plain, at a little distance from the sea, embowered in groves and gardens, with a vast old castle in the middle of the town. The old port is a separate town, about a mile from the city, at the extremity of a point of land on our right. A line of detached rocks stretches round from the point in a segment of a circle, and on the furthest of them, right opposite the city, is a little castle used as a prison. The plain about Tripoli seems fair and fertile. The Lebanon range is still the background of the scene. Since morning the sun has drawn up light clouds which hang on the sides of the mountains, and the snow-streaked summits are seen through the floating masses of vapour with very charming effect. It is the most beautiful piece of scenery we have seen since the Bay of Naples.

In the afternoon we lay off Latakia, a small town with a large mosque in a commanding situation, while eight or nine minarets showed the existence of others less conspicuous. A ruined castle defended a little harbour protected by a wall, only large enough for small boats. The

sea had become rough, and the task of landing goods and passengers was not only difficult but dangerous. The shore-boat at the foot of the steamer's ladder rose and fell on the waves, and tossed and tumbled about, and ground and crashed against the steamer's side, so that the unfortunate passengers who had to land needed to exercise considerable presence of mind and dexterity to avoid stepping into the boat just when it was receding many feet below them, with the risk of tumbling into the sea, or of trying to step in when it was ascending, and getting their limbs crushed between the boat and the ladder. There was just one moment, as the boat hung on the top of the wave, when it was necessary to let go everything and step in. An invalid lady was carried on one arm by a gentleman friend, who hung on the step for what seemed a very long time before a favourable moment occurred when he could venture to step in and lay his burden fainting on the stern sheets of the boat. The sea continued rough during the night.

CHAPTER III.

ALEXANDRETTA TO ALEPPO.

On the morning of the 18th of May we awoke in a storm of lightning and thunder and heavy rain, and going on deck, found ourselves at anchor in the Bay of Alexandretta. We are in the north-east corner of the Mediterranean. On the left, in the distance, are the mountains of Cilicia. Right before us the picturesque range of Amanus sweeps round at the distance of a few miles, terminating on the south in the bold bluff of Ras el Khanzir, which projects into the sea and forbids any passage round it. This sweep of the Amanus encloses the plain of Alexandretta; the town lies along the edge of the low beach.

It is a nook of land full of the most interesting historical associations. In the East the great roads are defined by the natural features of the country, and have continued unchanged for centuries. The great road from Europe to Asia always lay through the pass between the mountains and the sea, through the "Cilician Gates" on our left, across the plain over which our eyes range, and by the Bailan pass and the "Syrian Gates," through the Amanus range before us. Across that plain Alexander the Great followed the footsteps of Cyrus the younger. The Ptolemies, Tiberius, Vespasian, Sapor, Constantius, Heraclius, the Khalifs, the Byzantine emperors, the Sultans of Turkey, the Crusaders, in succession, have marched their armies across that little plain, and threaded the defile through which we shall follow them before nightfall.

The storm soon blew over, and we put ourselves and our baggage into a shore-boat and landed.

While the people at the Custom House were trying how long it was possible to delay our luggage, and the vice-consul was obligingly trying how soon he could find horses for us, we walked through the town. Alexandretta contains 800 houses (the population of Eastern towns is reckoned by houses or families, and in ordinary cases five may be taken as the average number of a family), divided in religion between the Mosque, the Synagogue, and the Church. The Christians are again divided into Latin, Greek, and Armenian. There are no antiquities in the place. The only things of interest are a large building, formerly a factory of the East Indian Company, and some tombs of an English family, who lived here in the seventeenth century, in the churchyard of the Greek Church. The neighbourhood is charming. Lofty hills of picturesque outline, the lower heights of the Amanus range, enclose on the land side the little plain, whose coast is washed by the sea, now blue and sparkling again after the sudden storm which swept over it an hour ago. Unhappily the drainage of the hills is not carried off by any natural watercourse; it soaks down to the lowest level of the plain, which is down by the sea-shore, and there forms a marsh, and in this marsh the sea-port of Alexandretta is situated. The streets are irregularly planned like very narrow lanes, with a raised footway on each side, and a track in the middle for the horses and camels. We walk on until the road gradually disappears under water, and we continue our exploration by means of a plank with a hand-rail, which leads further into the marsh. We are still in a suburb of the town, for the houses continue at intervals. They are judiciously adapted to the exigencies of the circumstances. Four posts driven into the deep soil form the framework. A platform, a few feet above the water, forms the floor; another platform, eight or nine feet higher, forms the roof; and a screen of "wattle and dab" completes the enclosure of the house. They are veritable "lake dwellings," and excited our interest greatly. As we

looked round we thought of Martin Chuzzlewit's "Eden." The glare of the hot sun on the surface of the marsh seemed to be breeding fevers under our very eyes; and the innumerable frogs, thrusting their heads above water and filling the air with their croaking, gave the last touch of weirdness to the scene.

We were thankful, when we returned from our walk, to find our luggage piled up in the vice-consul's yard, and the horses just coming round. Then came the unpacking of the long box in which our guns had been brought, and the big box in which our saddles were stowed, and the bargaining about whether we needed a horse more or less to carry all our luggage, and the price per horse from here to Aleppo. The bargain being at length concluded by the vice-consul on our behalf, it is sealed, not in the English fashion by our giving the katurji earnest money in advance, but by his giving us several medjids (dollars) as security for his fulfilling his bargain.

At last the pack horses are loaded, the saddle horses saddled, the stirrups adjusted to the right length, and we start in Indian file through the narrow streets and out into the open country. As we turned our backs upon the steamer still at anchor in the roadstead, we felt as if we had left hold of the last rope which connected us with England; and with the caravan of pack horses bearing our tents and goods pacing steadily eastward before us, we felt that we had fairly entered upon our adventures.

The scene before us was a very pleasant gate of entrance into Asia. The bold, picturesque hills which bound our prospect remind me of some of the scenery of our English lake district. The broken ground in the foreground is dotted over with the tents of Turkish soldiers who are waiting for a steamer to take them off to the seat of war. Our road soon carries us among the spurs of the hills, diminishes to a bridle track, and ascends and winds continually round and up the hill-sides. We are fairly and pleasantly

launched on our adventures; new trees and shrubs shadow the road, and new wild flowers catch the eye. That, I think, must be oleander with its handsome bunches of purple bloom, and that looks like a wild hollyhock; and what is that tall spike of handsome yellow bloom? How delightful it all is, and what spirits we are in! Is it that the air among the hills is exhilarating? or is it that our spirits are elevated by the sense that we are fairly launched on our adventures?

The ravine grows deeper and narrower at our feet, and higher mountains appear beyond those which we first saw from the level of the plain, until, as evening draws on, we come in sight of the town of Bailan, which is to be our first sleeping place on Asiatic ground. The town fills the whole gorge, rising back towards its head and up both its steep sides, no two houses being apparently on the same level. It looks very un-English; all the walls, of sun-dried earth, are still the colour of the soil, and the flat roofs give an unfinished look to the houses as if the roofs were not put on yet. The twilight is upon us as we ride through the street of the town, but we see an aqueduct across the gorge, and hear the sound of abundant waters everywhere.

Our katurjis (horsemen) are Bailan men, and spend to-night at home, and try to persuade us to sleep in one of their houses. But we have taken the trouble to carry tents on purpose to avoid the necessity of having to sleep in the native houses, so I decline their invitations. Then they want us to pitch the tent in the garden of one of the houses, but when I have been persuaded to climb up the hill-side to inspect the garden, I find it a little back-yard in which the fowls seem to be the only gardeners, so I decline again. I am induced to go a little further to inspect another most eligible camping ground, which turns out to be the roof of one of the houses of the town. When I insisted at last upon going to the usual camping ground, we resumed our way through the town, and turned aside upon a bit of rocky waste

ground beyond, where a wayside fountain supplies the first necessity of life. Alas ! we had wasted the short twilight in false stoppages, and we had to put up our tent, and make our first attempt at camping out, as well as we could in the dark. The attempt was not very successful ; it was eleven o'clock before we got a fire made, and some tea and boiled eggs for supper, and midnight before we lay down, without undressing, on our mattresses, to fall soon asleep.*

May 19.—Notwithstanding our late hours last night we were up this morning before dawn ; we washed at the fountain by starlight, breakfasted off tea and eggs, with a good draught of new milk, and started by 5.15.

For more than an hour our road still ascended, gradually climbing the slope of the ravine till it brought us to a table land at the top. On the way we met our first caravan of camels and pack-horses and mules, then another and another ; for though the road we have travelled is nothing but a bridle-track, it is the great high-road by which all the commerce of the country for many miles into the interior finds its way to the sea.

When we have reached the commencement of the eastern descent, and are able to look over the other side of the country, we realise for the first time the height to which we have so gradually ascended. We overlook the great plain of Antioch. Beneath us is the Lake of Antioch, called Bahr Ajoub (the White Lake) from the colour of its waters, half its hither side so shallow that it is covered with reeds. On the right is the gap through the hills by which the Orontes flows down to Antioch and the sea.

As we descend we meet here and there with traces of a paved road, relics, probably, of the period when Syria formed part of the Roman empire. Now and then we meet

* Bailân has a population of 500 houses, of which 300 are Mussulman, 200 Armenian, and there are twenty-four persons who style themselves Protestants, converts of the American missionaries.

a string of camels. We overtake a group of travellers; the man is in Frank dress, and carries a gun slung over his shoulder; a native nurse carries a child on horseback before her; the lady of the party rides in a takterawan—a square box, strapped more or less securely on the back of a horse, with rods at the four corners, which support a pyramidal canopy of coloured calico to protect the fair traveller from the sun, and curtains to screen her from the gaze of mankind—a picturesque vehicle to see winding among the bushes down the mountain paths, but a most uncomfortable and not very safe one for the cramped and helpless occupant.

At the bottom of the pass is a considerable square building, with a pointed arched entrance and a range of vaults on one side of the enclosure, probably a ruined khan built three or four centuries ago for the convenience of travellers. Here we enter upon the plain, at first stony and sprinkled over with dwarf acacia bushes, after a while covered with long grass. There are several great tumuli here and there about the plain, which look artificial, both from their situation and their shape. At about eleven o'clock we come to a river, the Kara Sou, or Black Water, and have our first experience of a ford. It looks rather deep, and flows between steep, high banks of black soil, and the broken slanting paths down the banks indicate that the ford lies diagonally across the stream. There are some black Koord tents on the other side, a little way up the stream, and their inhabitants are assembled on the opposite bank to see us cross. First go the baggage horses. It is rather deep, but they are getting safely across, when one horse misses the ford and begins to wade down the stream; deeper he goes at every plunge; he carries the trunks, in which are books, clothes, and photographic plates. With a shout and a plunge several of the Koords take the river, and head the horse back towards his proper exit, or he might have waded down

between those high banks as far as the Lake of Antioch. The things in the mails got wet of course, but most of them were such as took no great harm from a wetting. We had no opportunity to dry them for the next two days, and some of my books still bear traces of their immersion in the Kara Sou.

As we approached the other side of the wide plain our horses' feet began to splash into water, and very soon we found ourselves crossing an extensive marsh. Our leader chose to ride along a track which was free from the rank vegetation, and seemed to me like a ditch across the marsh. I chose to take a line of my own where the grass seemed thickest, and therefore, I assumed, the marsh shallowest or the ground firmest; until it occurred to me that the supposed ditch was really the road, and the absence of vegetation arose from its being trodden under-foot; when I too turned into this strange high-road from the towns of northern Syria to their only seaport. I wished we had been riding post; I should have enjoyed squattering through the marsh at a hand gallop like a moss-trooper. After half an hour of marsh, as we approached a wide creek, we came upon the remains of a paved causeway, known as that of Murad Pasha, which no doubt once carried the traffic high and dry through the marsh. The (pointed) arches by which it crosses the creek are kept from falling into the water, because the creek is unfordable, but the causeway on the other side, for some twenty minutes' distance, is in such a state of disrepair that it is unusable.

Having crossed the creek, the caravan stopped to lunch. It was 12.30, and we had been seven hours in the saddle, and were hungry enough. But, alas! in our ignorance of Turkish travelling, we had made no provision for luncheon. There were two or three black Koord tents a few hundred yards off, and our katurjis soon bargained for a bowl of yohoort (a sour preparation of milk, something like

curds), and having brought some native bread with them, they feasted sumptuously. But we English could not eat yohoort, and there was no fresh milk to be had; long before noon all the morning's milk has been submitted to some process for its preservation. As a favour, in consideration that we were travellers, the Koords disturbed their bowls to let us have a little, which was half milk, half butter, and I had a few biscuits, and we made a scanty luncheon out of these. Then we lay on the grass for half an hour, and then resumed our journey.

In another hour we had reached the other side of the great plain, and pursued a bay of it which wound in among low hills. Presently it brought us up into the hills—stony, barren hills, with here and there a little rude cultivation; so out upon a wide plain, with low hills in the distance, and two or three great square tumuli scattered about it. See, a group of five vultures sitting together! Soon after a flock of storks hovering round and round, and at last settling gently down on the ground, as rooks do at home. I noted metamorphic rocks cropping up here and there through the prevailing limestone. We pass a caravanserai by the road-side, out of which people come to look at us; among others, three European Popish priests, who mount and start Aleppo-wards, while our katurji is bargaining for barley for his horses and loading it. Some miles further we pass a famous mineral hot spring, over which a rude bath-house is built; and a little further still we come to a shallow sparkling stream, with a house and a group of trees on the further side, which are the village and river of Afrin. A little after six o'clock we cross the river, and pitch our tent on a patch of grass on the further side, glad to find that the solitary house is a house of public entertainment, where we can get the food which by this time we very much need. Fried eggs, even if the oil in which they are fried is a little rancid, and boiled fowls, even if they are all bone and sinew, are

very acceptable to travellers who have had a light breakfast, and still lighter luncheon, and thirteen hours on horseback.

May 20.—The katurjis grumbled because I would not get up till four o'clock; but at that hour we rose, washed at the river, breakfasted on tea and hard-boiled eggs, and got on our way by about 5.30.

At first we wound among low hills, which grew bolder as we got further on. At 6.10 we came to a village, in whose buildings some great squared stones were introduced; others were lying about; and there were several subterranean excavations, with a well-like opening from the surface of the ground, which I was told were used for storing wheat. Half a mile further were much more important remains situated on a steep bank, above the dry watercourse along which the winter rains pour down from the hills; a subterranean chamber, partly blocked up with stones, entered by a door in the side of the bank. Rather extensive remains of walls, of very large stones, with a bevelled base. At the further end a doorway, moulded and sculptured. The lintel, of one fine stone, is moulded, and has a cross patée within a circle, sculptured in the centre, and a leaf in each of its angles. The capitals of the pilasters which carry it have a suit of mouldings, which may enable the Byzantine antiquary to determine the date.

There was some rude cultivation here and there in favourable patches of soil, but for the most part the country is barren and treeless, but with large showy wild flowers in profusion. At length we reached the top of the grassy hills, and came out upon an extensive rocky plateau. It was as if the ground had been paved by the Titans with huge slabs of rock, irregular and ill-fitting, and then other rocks had been scattered plentifully all about. There was no road across this plateau, only faint traces here and there of the line along which previous

horses had scrambled and slidden round and over the rocks. In some places, indeed, there was only one practicable way of surmounting a difficulty. Every horse must needs place his foot on the same spot ; and here holes six inches deep were worn in the solid rock by the traffic of centuries. No description can give an adequate idea of the ruggedness of the road, yet the horses picked their way through it cleverly and at a fair pace.

At 9.30 we descended into an extensive shallow basin, or plain, in this rocky table-land, where there was some depth of soil which was cultivated. In the middle of it stood the rather extensive ruins of an ancient city. A few Arabs still live in corners of the old houses, and one larger building is converted into a mosque. The people call their town Isera. The consul at Aleppo told us it was the ancient Dana ; and Texier's map and Keith Johnston's atlas place Dana hereabout. If so, it is a city of historic fame. It lies in the great road from Antioch to the East. It was part of the dominions of Zenobia, and near it, probably in the battle-field afforded by this basin of cultivated land, was fought the great battle in which Aurelian defeated and took captive the heroic Queen of Palmyra.

Some of the buildings are in a wonderful state of perfectness, considering that the storms and earthquakes, the political and social changes and chances, of thirteen centuries have passed over them since they were last inhabited. There is, for example, a group on the west side of the town. On one side of the street is a house built of great hewn stones, with a two-light window in the upper story, divided by a shaft, whose capital has an imitation of the Ionic volute at its angles and a cross in a circle between them. On the opposite side of the street, a little higher up, is the façade of a public building, with a portico in front, supported by two handsome columns of semi-classical style. At the further end of this building is a

circular arch. A little lower down, on the same side of the street, are the remains of a church. Its walls still stand to a considerable height. In the north wall is a square-headed doorway, still perfect, with the lintel moulded and sculptured on both sides. Part of the dome of the apse still stands, built of large squared stones; and the jamb and part of the arch from the nave to the sanctuary. The mosque is also not improbably another church, and there are many other buildings besides. Altogether the town is most interesting, and deserves careful examination and description.*

Resuming our journey, at a little distance on the right we saw what appeared to be another ruined town on the top of a hill; two hours afterwards, a few miles off on the right, a ruined city, with walls and gate, and a castle-like building in the interior; an hour after, still other less considerable ruins at a little distance on the left. But all these we were obliged, with great regret, to leave unvisited, our business being to make the best of our way to Koordistan, not to make a survey of the ruined cities of Northern Syria.

At last we descended from this plateau into a monotonous rocky region of low hills and shallow valleys, across which we travelled some hours before we reached the last hill-top, and Aleppo lay before us in the valley. It was a more imposing-looking city than I had anticipated. A large mediæval castle, on a lofty isolated rock, formed its nucleus. The town stretched to right and left of it, dignified with frequent domes and minarets; extensive groves of trees surrounded the city; monotonous low hills bounded the view on every side.

* De Vogüé's *Syrie Centrale* does not, in the numbers already published, give any illustrations of this place, and none seem to have been published.

CHAPTER IV.

ALEPPO.

As we approached the city, I cantered ahead with the interpreter, leaving W. in command of the caravan, with directions to wait at the entrance to the town while we went to the consulate to ask the consul's (Mr. Skeene's) advice about our lodgment. For in these Eastern towns there are no hotels. The traveller will find one or more khans, whose khanji will show him into an empty room, where he may spread his carpet on the dirty floor, and send out to the bazaar for his food. And sometimes he may find board and lodging with a citizen family, who receive him as a guest, and to whom, if no payment is asked, he makes a present on his departure, whose amount is really his hotel bill, as calculated by the guest instead of the host. Therefore we needed advice as to our lodgment.

The consul would have hospitably solved our question by taking us into his own house, but for the fact that part of the consulate had been shaken down by an earthquake, and another part carried away by a flood, and he and his family were living in the four rooms remaining to them out of the original twenty. He, however, directed us to the house of a Madame Cleopas, who would take us in, and sent a kavass to show us the way.

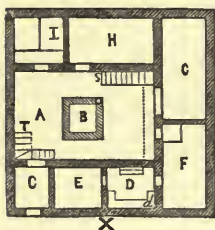
We had travelled seventy miles through plain and marsh, across mountain pass and rocky plateau, without a stumble, but the slippery stones of the streets proved more dangerous than all the rest of the journey, for two of our horses fell in the half-mile between the city gate and our lodging.

We were very glad at length to find ourselves in the cool courtyard of an Eastern house, with a marble tank in the middle, a group of trees overhanging it, and two or three kindly women bustling about to supply our wants. How pleasant the deep draught of cool sherbet which was at once brought to us ! and how we looked forward to the nice little appetising dinner which our landlady—a tidy little Frenchwoman (what luck!)—would serve us in a trice. We sat on the edge of the marble tank and watched the katurjis bring in our luggage, and pile it in a heap on one side the courtyard, then we had a little wrangling over the settlement of accounts and the backshish, and finally shook hands all round, and dismissed Johannes and his men for ever. Then we made a hasty toilette, and sat down in the divan to wait for dinner. It was pleasant to see the bustle going on in the rooms opposite, which we took to be the kitchens ; one of our party saw, with hungry, thankful eyes, a fowl being got ready for the spit, and announced it gleefully to the rest. The reader may think that we were greedy people to be thinking so much about our dinner, but the fact is we had not dined since Tuesday, and this was Saturday. The reader may rejoin that if that were the case it might be natural to think much about dinner then, but it is in bad taste to talk about it now. But we should give a very imperfect sketch of our impressions of Eastern travel if we did not make it clear and prominent that considerations of breakfast and dinner become very important considerations of daily recurrence. In your well-ordered English household breakfast and dinner come as regularly and, for all you know about it, as spontaneously as sunrise and sunset ; but in Eastern travel you soon find out how much forethought somebody must bestow upon the subject if you are to get any breakfast and dinner at all ; and a few failures in your arrangements soon bring you from the lofty indifference to eating and drinking, natural to a well-fed philosopher, down

to the humiliating condition of a hungry animal. At last dinner was served ; but alas for the vanity of human expectations ! It was a *jour maigre* with our landlady, and the bazaars were shut when we arrived. Pillaff with yohoort (rice and sour curds) is very good, no doubt, when you have learnt to like it, but we had not yet acquired the taste ; and fried potatoes very insufficiently represent roast meat ; there was a salad, indeed, but the fowl we expected with it was an optical illusion ; and there was nothing stronger than water wherewith to wash all down. Well, we tried to make fun of it, and, like the Barmecide, invited one another to take another slice of the sirloin or a leg of the fowl ; but it was melancholy fun. In the morning the consul paid us a visit, and insisted upon our dining with him every evening during our stay.

The house in which we found ourselves was a very good example of an Eastern town house, and I was very glad of the opportunity of making myself thoroughly acquainted with it. Some of my readers will, I think, be glad of a careful description of it. The open court already mentioned forms the nucleus round which the various apartments are arranged. This court is paved with marble, once white, now mellowed by age and use to the colour of parchment. In the middle of the court is a square raised tank, constructed of marble slabs, with a fountain in the middle. At one angle of the tank a little well shaft is bored through the marble and down into unknown depths, and over it is a small crane of ornamental ironwork, by which a tiny bucket is let down into some subterranean reservoir or aqueduct, and brings up bright cold water for drinking. The tank is shaded by a couple of trees, which have soared upwards in search of light and sun and spread into a mass of foliage above, while some orange-trees in tubs supply fresh green foliage below. The rooms ranged round this court are two stories high, with flat roofs which form an additional suite of open-air parlours and bedrooms.

The accompanying sketch plan, drawn from memory, and therefore only to be relied on as an indication of the arrangement of the main divisions of the house, will help our description: *x* is the narrow street, formed of high stone walls, whose only openings on the ground-floor are the doorways of the houses, and here and there a small projecting window in the upper story, by which the inmates of the houses can get a view up and down the street; just beyond Madame Cleopas' door a pointed arch is thrown over the narrow street, with a chamber over it. The entrance into the house is by the passage *c*; *A* is the court, *B* the tank, *D* the divan—a deep recess of the whole



PLAN OF HOUSE AT
ALEPPO.

height of the house, opening into the court by a lofty pointed arch, with voussoirs of alternate black and white marble carried on Saracenic carved corbels; it forms a lofty open-air sitting-room, and is the reception-room of the master of the house; it is raised two steps from the courtyard, paved with marble, and has a broad raised bench round three sides, cushioned and comfortable; the

corner of the divan *d* is the place of honour; it opens by two doors into the small eating-room *e* and the saloon *f*. There is a chamber over the passage *c* and the room *e*. *G* *F* are two large saloons occupying one side of the house; they have vaulted cellars or store-rooms beneath, opening by low arched windows upon the court; over them are two chambers lighted by two tiers of windows, the lower square openings closed with shutters only, the upper narrow, unplayed and unglazed lancets, with Saracenic arches. The chamber over *f*, which we occupied as a bedroom, has also a small triangular projecting window towards the street, into which the curious may thrust his head and see

what is going on in the street below. On the third side of the house is *h* the kitchen ; *i*, wood house and offices ; these have chambers over them ; and the flat roof over them is converted into a bower by a trelliswork, over which are trained the boughs of a vine which grows up the side of the wall. A fine external stone stair, *s*, from its first landing gives access to the chamber over the kitchen ; a few more steps lead to a handsome stone balcony, carried on bold corbels, which gives access to the chambers over *g f*, to the flat roofs over *d* and *e*, and to the chamber over the arch which has been described as crossing the street at this end of the house. The stair *t* gives access to the chamber over *c e*. The fourth side of the court is a blank wall, along which is a narrow flower-bed, with a few plants of lavender, and a few flowers, and a vine growing up into the corner. The house is well built of hewn stone ; the stone stair and balcony and the pointed arch of the divan are very good architectural features, and the whole effect of the house is very picturesque. The divan was our chief sitting-room, cool and pleasant at all hours of the day ; the view from it into the courtyard with its fountain and trees, and the background of grey stone half hidden by vines ; the glow of the air and the blue of the sky above, and the cool shadows below ; the women of the house moving about the further side of the court now and then ; and the swallows darting in and out to their nests under the roof, made altogether a very charming picture of an Eastern interior ; one could lounge in the corner of the divan, inhaling the soothing breath of a chibouk, and enjoying the picture, for an hour together.

In the heat of the day we were very thankful to keep in the shelter of our cool and pleasant quarters, but in the cooler portions of the day we saw what we could of the place.

It is a fine city. The houses are lofty, built of good hewn stone, with pointed arches and ornamented doorways,

and projecting latticed windows, and other features of architectural interest. I suppose the greater part of it is work of the fifteenth century. The bazaars are extensive; they are vaulted over with plain pointed stone vaulting in square bays, with a square hole through the crown of each vault, through which alone the streets with their shops receive their light. The open streets of the city present many interesting architectural street views, with which the traveller may fill his sketch-book; but the bazaars are the focus of interest to the curious traveller. There is a curious contrast between the glare of the sunlight in the open streets and the clear definition of every object, and the hazy twilight of the bazaar, into which the square slanting shafts of light stream in through the holes in the vaulting. There is endless interest in the unglazed shops, each with its merchant squatted on the counter surrounded by his goods, smoking his narghile and chatting with his neighbour; in the cook-shop at the corner, where there is always a long skewer of kabobs over the charcoal fire; in the iced sherbet-dealer's stall, with his *mécanique* always whirling round and striking its little bells. In the busy part of the day, too, there is a constant stream of passengers slowly making its way through the bazaars, exhibiting great variety of costume: the native merchant, in his graceful white robe and turban; the Arab camel driver, in his abbai and kefiyeh; the Christian women, in their hissar, a snowy cambric veil, which covers the whole figure and face, leaving only one bright, curious eye visible; the travelled Turk or Armenian, in Frank dress, with a red fez; not forgetting the two Englishmen, who strolled about in their native costume, rare enough to be a subject of interest and speculation to all beholders.

But the whole scene needs a little treatment in one's mind to realise its pictorial effect. In fact, the streets are dirty, the confined air of the bazaars is musty, the things

exposed for sale in the shops are trumpery, the dresses of the people are chiefly linen and calico. But half shut your eyes, so that you see only the stately mediæval architecture, the wonderful lights and shadows, the flowing forms and brilliant colours of the costumes, the varied groups and interesting faces, and you see that every step gives you the material out of which an artist would make a picture full of interest, and from which the traveller may derive unceasing delight if he will put himself into the right attitude of mind.

The town walls and gates are tolerably perfect and interesting. The castle seems the mere shell of an ancient wall enclosing modern buildings. The rock on which it stands has been scarpèd so as to deprive it of all picturesque-ness. The feature of most interest remaining is the great entrance gate and its barbican on the outer side of the moat, and the drawbridge and covered way which connect the two. They make a group of great architectural interest, of which we obtained a photograph. The castle is said by tradition to have been built by the celebrated Saladin, after its destruction by an earthquake in 1170 A.D.; and the same tradition says that the window over the upper gateway was a favourite lounging-place of his son Malek-ed-Daher. The gate bears the name of the Malek and the date A.H. 605 (A.D. 1227). Several of the khans are large and architecturally interesting. Some of the mosques also are ancient and fine buildings. The minaret is a very charming architectural invention, and the combination of the dome and minaret has a most happy effect. We studied the various modifications of design of the minarets with great interest; it seems to be the characteristic feature of the Mohammedan religion, and has attracted the fancy of the Moslem artist, as the cross did that of the Christian artist of the Middle Ages. In its general form it is a round, or multi-sided column, a spreading capital supports the gallery from which the muezzin makes his proclamation,

and from the midst of the gallery rises another short column with a conical capping, sometimes terminated by a metal crescent. From these minarets the muezzins, five times a day, call the people to prayers. It is a singular sound. From one of the minarets near our lodging we used to hear a loud voice begin in a monotone, which was taken up by more distant voices, just as in a European city one clock begins to strike the hour and the others chime in one by one : " LA ILLAHA IL ALLAH, MOHAMMED RESOUL ALLAH " ; these voices, coming out of the sky and floating over the subjacent city, proclaiming the Name of God, are not without a solemn effect.

Indeed I was greatly struck with some of the external phenomena of Mohammedanism. This perpetual proclamation of the name of God to every town and village is in striking contrast with the way in which we keep our religion within the church walls, and shrink from obtruding it upon the public notice. Again, the sight of a Mussulman saying his prayers in public is very striking ; the absence of false shame, the manly dignity with which he stands before his God, the humble reverence with which he kneels and prostrates himself in the dust before His Majesty, the absorbed attention with which he repeats his prayer ; it made me blush as I thought of the way in which Englishmen usually behave in Divine service. The simple earnestness of their belief in God and His overruling providence, too, is in contrast with the state of mind so common among us, of vague early religious impressions, honeycombed by a smattering of scientific doubts, picked up out of newspapers and magazines, among the " educated " classes, and the stolid indifference of the uneducated masses.

The minaret of the Mosque of Zechariah is square, and is said to have been the tower of a church dedicated to a saint of that name, converted into a mosque at the time of the Mohammedan conquest. It is said that the procla-

mation made at midnight from this minaret, and made with the hand before the mouth so as to disguise the words, is not the usual proclamation of the muezzins, but is a proclamation of the Name of the Holy Trinity. The following story is told in explanation of the peculiarity: the first muezzin who made the usual proclamation from the minaret of the desecrated church fell from his high tower and was killed; the next also met with a violent death; the third, before he ventured to execute his office, went into the church and prayed to the Christian saint to whom it had been dedicated to save him from the fate of his predecessors. It is like the story of the captains of fifties who were sent to take Elijah.* A venerable figure appeared to him, and promised him his life on condition that, instead of the usual proclamation, he would recite the trisagion. Accordingly the pious muezzin made the proclamation dictated to him, in these words: "KADOOS ALLAH, KADOOS EL KAWI, KADOOS ILEZI LA IEMOOT, ERHAMNA," which is an Arabic translation of ἅγιος ὁ θεός, ἅγιος ὁ ἰσχυρὸς, ἅγιος ὁ ἀθάνατος, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. The office of muezzin has been handed down from father to son in the same family; and to this day the listener can hear the voice from the minaret of Zechariah begin: "*Kadoos Allah, kadoos, &c.*," and go off into an unintelligible cry, clearly different from the usual cry, and believed to be that which is written above.

I saw three of the churches, the others were closed. The Papal Greek is a modern church, divided into nave and aisles by clustered columns, without capitals, which support vaulted roofs. Over the aisles are triforia, which form wide galleries, where the women sit behind lattice-work. It has an altar and two side-altars, as in orthodox Greek churches. The choir has curious stalls of the simplest construction, like a child's nursery chair, the seat being made to turn up like the seats of our cathedral stalls. The bishop's throne is a carved seat, fixed at the east end

* 2 Kings i. 9.

of the south range of stalls, facing west ; on the opposite side of the choir is a chair for some other dignitary facing south. There are two ambones, like pulpits, one on each side of the nave. The decoration of the interior was rather gaudy. A priest in Greek vestments was reading the Gospel in "sing-song" in the south chapel, the people standing to hear, and at the close of the Gospel he read a notice that from this day (Ascension Day) people were to keep their fasts again. The church would hold about 600 on the floor, besides the triforial galleries. Outside in the court, under a kind of cloister, stood a confessional of a usual European type, *i.e.*, with a central stall for the priest and two stalls for the penitents, all open to the front, and therefore in sight of the people.

The Maronite Church is divided into a body and aisles of about four bays. The columns are slender, with capitals of the usual honeycomb pattern, with which the vaultings of the Alhambra have made us familiar ; there is a brass fillet at the top and bottom of each column, and the whole effect is rather elegant. There is a raised platform at the east end, on which are arranged five altars with a low screen in front. Also on this platform, near the middle of the east wall, is the bishop's throne, facing west, with a portrait of the bishop at the back of the chair in the attitude of benediction. There were rows of benches in front of the altars, in which some men were sitting, apparently engaged in silent prayer or meditation. A curtain screened off the western half of the church, which was appropriated to the women.

The Papal Syrian Church is a modern church, with sanctuary, choir, and nave and aisles of about five bays.

The Romanists are building a new church, which will be a fairly handsome building, with schools adjoining.

"Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master of the *Tiger*,"
Macbeth, Act I., Sc. 3.

I used to think this one of Shakspeare's geographical

blunders, like his giving a seaport to Hungary, but I am not so sure of it now. True, Aleppo is seventy miles from the sea, with a lofty mountain range between them ; but Alexandretta is regarded as the port of Aleppo, as Seleucia was the port of Antioch, or the Piræus of Athens, or Ostia of Rome. Only a week ago, when there was a panic among the Aleppine Christians in consequence of the murder of the two consuls at Salonica, the admiral of the Mediterranean fleet telegraphed to the consul at Aleppo, offering to send him a frigate if he thought it necessary. So Shakspeare was not necessarily tripping when he assigned Aleppo as the destination of the unfortunate master of the *Tiger*.

The place was well known by name at least in Shakspeare's days, for the English Levant Company, incorporated by Elizabeth, had a factory here; as one of the stages of the overland route which the commerce with the East pursued before the discovery of the sea route by the Cape of Good Hope. There is not a single English merchant left in the place now ; but the chancellerie of the consulate contains a whole room full of old documents relating to the factory, out of which probably an interesting paper might be compiled on the early commercial relations between England and the East.

Every evening a little before sunset we lounged across from our lodging, willingly losing our way in the labyrinth of streets, so as to see more of the town ; then across one of the burial-grounds, watching the glowing sunset and the new moon, and enjoying the cool air ; and so to the consulate. The dinner was made piquant by novel Eastern dishes, and Greek wines and Aleppine nuts and fruits, and still more piquant by our host's stories of his long experience in the East. I have permission to enrich my journal with some of these stories, which, however, have not the same flavour as I recall them in memory, and write them in cold blood, as they had when our host told them while

we cracked our Pistachio nuts and sipped our Greek wine.

When Mr. Skeene first came to Aleppo a case came before him in his consular court for adjudication. One of the litigants called upon him, and, without any beating about the bush, offered him a bribe of £500 for judgment in his favour. Mr. Skeene indignantly turned to the dragoman and told him, "Kick that fellow down-stairs," and the dragoman in his zeal obeyed the order *au pied de la lettre*. Of course the consul felt a glow of self-approval, and was glad to have had an opportunity of giving an example of the honour of an English gentleman. Next day he heard that the disappointed visitor was saying to his friends, "What a man this new consul is! I offered him £500 for his judgment, and he kicked me down-stairs. How much more, I wonder, does he want? Does he expect £1,000?"

On another occasion he was obliged in justice to send a man to prison—an infirm old man; he said to the dragoman, "You must take him to prison, but see that he is not beaten or illtreated," as prisoners often are. The dragoman returned.

"You attended to what I said about that old man?"

"Yes, sir, I made it all right."

"What did you do?"

"Well, sir, when we got into the bazaar, I let the old man slip off, and took another man instead."

"What! and took him to prison?"

"Yes, sir; he's quite safe there."

So then the consul had to send explanations to the Pasha that a mistake had been made, and get the innocent man liberated.

During the Indian Mutiny, a man presented himself,

emaciated and in rags, at the consulate, and addressed the consul in English with an Irish accent. Mr. Skeene found that after the massacre at Cawnpore he had escaped and fled across the country, and had walked all the way till he found himself at Aleppo.

“And what was that big river I passed a fortnight ago?”

“Why, that was the Euphrates.”

“Ah! the Euphrates, was it? A mighty fine river.”

He had been kindly treated; whenever he saw a caravan going westward, he joined it, and the camel drivers would give him a crust of bread, and so he toiled on.

Mr. Skeene suggested that after such a wonderful feat he should be inclined to complete it by walking right across Europe and home. “Yes,” he said, apologetically, “but you see, sir, I *do* begin to feel a little tired.” So Mr. Skeene gave him money to get home, which he would only accept as a loan, and duly repaid.

Mr. Skeene was out with a tribe, of whose sheik he was a sworn brother. A caravan was seen in the distance, and the whole tribe started off for it. Mr. Skeene was mounted on a hot three-year-old, which he could not master, so that H.B.M. consul found himself galloping with a tribe of Bedowin to plunder a caravan. The traders made no resistance; the sheik merely turned the head of the leading camel towards his tents, the rest followed. But the consul entered into conversation with his brother the sheik. “Why take the property of these poor men?” “By our laws it is honestly ours; besides, we have been three months with nothing to eat but dates, and here are sixty camels, each bearing two sacks of wheat.”

Some of the caravan people, overhearing the conversation, at last recognised the speaker through his Arab dress. “You are the English consul at Aleppo!” “Yes.” “Then we are saved.” “My poor fellow, I have said what I can without effect. I cannot help you.” “Yes you can. Are

you not the sworn brother of this sheik ? ” “ Yes. ” “ And are you not the sworn brother of Mahommed el Ganim of the Weldi ? ” “ Yes. ” “ Well, the caravan belongs to him ; Mahommed and the sheik being both your brothers, are also brothers, and a brother will not rob a brother. ” The matter was explained to the sheik. He gravely examined into the case.

“ Are these the sacks of Mahommed el Ganim ? ”

“ Yes. ”

“ Swear it by Allah ; ” and he swore it. Then the sheik turned to the consul.

“ Is Mahommed el Ganim your brother ? ”

“ Yes. ”

“ Swear it. ”

And the consul swore it.

With a motion of his hand the sheik turned the leading camel's head towards Aleppo ; and the tribe of Bedowin looked on in silence while the whole train of sixty camels solemnly paced after it, carrying away the 120 sacks of wheat, which they had already counted as their own. The consul stayed a week or two with the tribe and had nothing but dates to eat for his pains !

An Arab had set his heart on a famous mare owned by a member of another tribe. He tried to buy it in vain. He tried to slay the owner, and so win the horse ; but its fleetness baffled his pursuit. One day he put himself in the way, and as the famous mare rode by, her rider saw a man writhing on the ground. “ What are you doing there ? ” “ I am ill and in agony. ” “ Well, get up and hold on by my mare, and I will help you. ” “ I can't ; I can't walk a step. ” “ Well, I see who you are, but I won't leave you here. ” And he dismounted and helped his enemy laboriously into his saddle, who, as soon as he was fairly seated, struck the sharp stirrups into the mare's side and galloped away, “ Stop ! ” cried the man, “ stop and

hear me. I give you the mare on one condition—that you will never tell the trick you played me, lest people should be afraid to help those who are really in distress.”

On one occasion Mr. Skeene was visiting a tribe of Arabs, when in the evening some of the tribe rode in triumphantly. They had brought in the bags of the Aleppo mail.

The consul remonstrated. They offered him the letters.

“No ; I must have the money also.”

“Impossible ; it was our fair spoil, purchased with our own spears.”

“Then order my horse and let me go ; I will not stay any longer with you.”

“You would put me to shame if you left me ; my character for hospitality would be forfeited.”

“Well, then, give me the money.”

At last the men with the money were ordered in. The sheik beat them well, and made them disgorge their spoil. Just then scouts came in ; “the troops are upon us.” The tents were struck, the flocks, and women and children were sent off. The consul said good-bye.

“You will not leave us now ? ”

“Yes. The troops are acting against you ; the English consul has no business here.”

They let him go with the letters and the money. He rode out and cantered up a neighbouring hill. He saw the troops in the distance, horse, foot, and guns. He saw the Arabs manœuvring ; they let the troops get almost within gunshot and then cantered on a little, like a lap-wing, luring the troops away from their families and flocks hiding behind the hills. Then avoiding the troops—for he would not betray his late hosts—he took a course northwards, and cantered 180 miles into Aleppo ; summoned the merchants next day ; delivered their letters and money ; and found that the whole sum taken had been honestly returned.

I may mention two other stories learnt here, one which interested us in the present disturbed state of affairs. In the former troubles in A.D. 1860, when 4,000 people were massacred in Damascus, there was a rising also of the fanatical Mussulmans in Marash and fighting in the streets. Word was sent to the consul at Aleppo. He went to the pasha, and urged him to send troops. He was willing to send some foot, horse, and a couple of guns, but there was a difficulty about a commander.

"I am an old soldier," said the consul; "will you put them under my orders?"

"Will you take orders from the consul?" said the pasha to the lieutenant-colonel.

"Yes."

So off they went. At a day's distance from Marash the consul rode forward with half a dozen attendants. On the road one was taken ill, and another's horse had a reluctance to go further, and they all dropped off one by one, and the consul rode into the town alone; went to the house of the American missionaries, and learnt from them exactly how matters stood. The authorities were paralysed, and the crowd, under some sixteen leaders, were having it all their own way.

He rode to the Serai.

"Where is the pasha?"

"He is ill, and can see nobody."

"Where is he?"

"He is in the harem."

He went to the harem; the door was locked. He knocked, and was told the pasha was ill and would see nobody. He put his foot to the lock, and the door flew open under a scientific kick; pushed his way through a cluster of negresses, and found the pasha lying on his divan; felt his pulse, and drew his own conclusions as to the state of his health. The pasha would do nothing, but gave Mr. Skeene verbal permission to act as he thought

best. He learnt that the leaders of the riot were at that moment assembled in a mosque ; on his return he happily met his troops entering the town ; at once marched to the mosque ; put a cordon of sentries round it, and arrested all within. That night all was quiet ; next day the ring-leaders were sent to prison, and the riot was at an end.

The other story is of the cholera last year in Aleppo. Mrs. Skeene was on the eve of a projected visit to England, and the consul urged her to go. "Do you think I will leave you alone at such a time ?" They put their little boy in safety, and remained to do their duty. The consul's stabling happened to be empty ; his wife turned it into a hospital, collected sixty patients, begged money from some of the richer townspeople ; and during four months had the English hospital full, and nursed the patients with her own hands. When we were there the number was reduced to thirty inmates.

In the course of these after-dinner conversations the consul impressed upon us that our projected journey was a much more serious undertaking than we were disposed to think it, both on account of the general dangers, and especially on account of the dangers of the climate. Almost every Englishman new to the country, we were assured, had to pay his tribute to the malarious climate. Especially we were advised that we ought not to make the proposed detour by Mosul. The plague was raging in the lower part of the Tigris ; one death from it had occurred at Mosul, but that was in the case of a stranger who had brought it with him, and the disease had not spread ; another case, however, might be imported, and it might spread. In any case it was not unlikely that the Turkish authorities might remove the existing *cordon sanitaire* to the north of Mosul ; and we

were assured that to be caught within it, and have to do quarantine for a fortnight in a Turkish lazaretto, was almost as bad as to have the plague. But it was not either of these possibilities which decided us. It was the high probability that unseasoned European travellers crossing the low plain about Mosul, and staying in Mosul at this season, would be attacked by Syrian fever, which, if it occurred to any one of our party, would, at the least, detain the whole party for months. The visit to Mosul was only a secondary object of our journey; its primary object was to visit the Nestorians of the mountains and the plain of Oroomiah, and return within six months; and it was not worth while to incur the very probable risk of sickness and detention for the sake of the secondary object. It was therefore determined that on arriving at Diarbekr we should turn northward toward the hills: "Remember that every mile of nothing and every foot of elevation is so much gain," said our experienced mentor.

I cannot speak too highly of Mr. Skeene's kindness to us. The agent to whom we had letters of credit, on which we depended for funds for the greater part of our journey, was insolvent, and the consul kindly arranged our money matters for us. The inquiries for money, however, made a little gossip, and we were annoyed to learn that the rumour going about the bazaars was that the Englishmen were taking £100,000 to the Nestorians—a rumour quite enough, if believed, to ensure our getting our throats cut before we had left Aleppo many hours. We took care to get the truth put into circulation that we were not taking a lira to the Nestorians; that we had no more cash than would pay our expenses from Aleppo to the next town where we could get English letters of credit cashed; but that we had a good many cartridges, with firearms of the newest construction, and that we intended to defend ourselves if attacked.

The consul also kindly superintended our hire of horses.

The scene was an interesting one. He came to our lodging with a dragoman and kavass, and was served with coffee and a narghile, according to etiquette; we all lounged on the divan, while the kavass was sent to the khan to find a katurji bashi (proprietor of caravan horses) and bring him to us. He stood below the divan, made the usual salute by touching the ground, his heart, and his forehead, and the dragoman opened the bargain with him. He asked too much, and, after a long wrangle, persisted in asking a higher price than the consul considered fair:—Were we not Englishmen, and therefore wealthy, and therefore fair game for extortion all along the line? The consul at last briefly terminated the negotiation: “Send him away; fetch another.” And the kavass started for another katurji bashi, while Madame Cleopas brought the consul another narghile. Another came, salaamed, and another abortive negotiation ensued, in the middle of which the first katurji reappeared; the two, I suspect, were in collusion. His attempt at imposition was also speedily terminated by the consul’s peremptory decision, “Send him away; fetch another.” And with the third we at length came to an arrangement, which—considering that we were English—was not considered very exorbitant. The consul had also looked us out a servant, who had previously travelled with Europeans, and was accustomed to their ways and wants, and was reputed honest—for an Armenian. He came and salaamed to the consul and his new masters; his wages were settled, and he was sent off to the bazaars to buy items of outfit which we had forgotten, and to lay in a store of provisions to last us from Aleppo to Urfa. Finally, we gave orders that everything should be ready for a start early next morning, and went off at sunset to pass our last pleasant evening at the consulate.

Our return from the consulate every evening was quite imposing. A servant went before us carrying the lantern, which everybody who is abroad after night-fall in an Eastern

town is required by the police regulations to carry; then marched two kavasses, in their gay jackets, carrying their swords, as an escort. We followed, picking our way carefully, lest we should tread upon one of the dogs which lie scattered about in the road, and do not take the trouble to get out of the passengers' way.

The following statistics of the population of Aleppo in 1876 were given us by Mr. Skeene: Mussulmans, 83,500; Christians, 29,900; Jews, 6,600; total, 120,000.

The Christians are divided as follows: Roman Catholics, 850; Orthodox Greeks, 1,640; Papal Greeks, 9,730; Old Armenians, 34,600; Papal Armenians, 5,400; Protestant Armenians, 80; Maronites, 4,200; Jacobites, 40; Papal Syrians, 4,500; total, 29,900.

There are six churches, viz.: Greek Orthodox, Papal Greek, Maronite, Old Armenian, Papal Armenian, and Papal Syrian. The few families of Jacobites have no church and no priest.

CHAPTER V.

ALEPPO TO BIRIDEJIK.

Saturday, May 27.—In the East things are the opposite of things in the West. In the West it is a sign of respect to take off the hat, in the East to keep the head covered, and take off the shoes. In the East gentlemen wear petticoats, and ladies trousers. The gentlemen dress gaily, and the women in sombre colours. We wash our hands before dinner, they wash them after dinner. We tuck up our feet in bed, and leave our heads bare; they carefully cover over their heads, and leave their feet sticking out at the bottom. In short, Eastern customs are in a hundred things in curious opposition to those of the West. Above all, in the East “procrastination is the soul of business,” and “punctuality the thief of time”; and they “never do to-day what they can put off till to-morrow.” We were to have been off by daybreak; we actually got off at 8.45. There is usually a horse to be shod at the last moment, or a pack-saddle to be mended. Then it takes time to arrange the luggage into suitable horse-loads, and to allot the heaviest loads to the strongest horses, and to get all the horses safely loaded. Then everything is done with deliberation; if the converse of the adage, “More haste, worse speed,” be true, the Turks ought to make good speed, for they certainly never hurry.

At last we were all arranged, and made quite a considerable caravan; four baggage horses, an extra horse for the use of the two katurjis, the servant, the zaptieh, the interpreter, and our two English selves, made ten

horses and seven men. We wound in single file through the narrow streets to the nearest gate, round the exterior of the wall, and took a course along a well-marked road which led N.E. The katurji bashi accompanied us a little way to see that we were fairly started, then wished us *bon voyage*, and cantered back into town.

Our road lay along the aqueduct which supplies Aleppo with water. It was constructed for the city by the Empress Helena as one of the good deeds with which she marked the way of her pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Alongside this venerable monument of ancient civilisation runs the latest adjunct of modern civilisation—the telegraph wire. It looks quite picturesque, with its slender poles forming a straight line, visible for miles across barren plains, up the rocky sides and over the lofty ridges of mountains; the contrast is piquant between the caravan tracks, unchanged since the feet of the camels of the Patriarchs trod them, and the iron thread along which modern science has compelled the lightning to carry its messages.

We passed some fields of tall, showy poppies. Three women in coloured costumes, which harmonised with the flowers, were in among the poppies, all of a row, at a little distance from one another; as we passed they all stood to gaze, shading their eyes from the sun, and formed a glowing picture, which reminded one of the German picture of a little maid among the meadow flowers which was in all the London print shop windows a year ago.

Our road lay over an undulating plain with low hills on each side; the road itself was a broad belt of many interlacing bridle-paths. At 2.45 we came to a Koord village, with a stone mill built upon the stream, which flows here with a lively natural current before its waters are guided into Helena's aqueduct, and carried off to quench the thirst of the Aleppines.

The stream is called the Halb-arch, the Aleppo stream, and the village Dagerman-li-coi, the village at the mill. Just beyond the village, on a plot of grass beside the stream, we camped for the night. It was a short day's work, but the next stage we were told would be nine hours, the stopping-places being fixed by the possibility of finding water for man and beast. We found our arrangements much more comfortable than on our journey from Scanderoon to Aleppo. Very soon after we had dismounted, Philippus brought me the folding camp chair to sit on under the shade of my umbrella, while, with the willing help of the katurjis, he got the roof of the tent set up, the sides being left open for the sake of the pleasant breeze; and presently we found our camp table spread under its shade with portable soup, a capital cold leg of mutton and a ham, presents from our late kind hosts, strawberry jam and bread for sweets, and Turkish coffee to finish with. We enjoyed our pic-nic much, and spent the evening pleasantly. There are several tumuli in sight: a quadrangular one, which we passed an hour ago on our road hither, the zaptieh says is called Tell-Fifûr; further on is a round tumulus; a small round tumulus just outside our village is still used as the village burial-place. These tumuli abound, we are told, all the way round by the river to Bagdad; many of them are probably natural hills artificially scarped, others altogether artificial. Many of them seem to have still a village upon or close adjoining them. Nothing seems to be known of their history; I should think they would be likely to repay the labour of examination and excavation. The sun is on the horizon; the twilight here is brief, and it is time to erect the tent walls, get the baggage under its protection, spread out the mattresses, and make all snug for the night.

Sunday, May 28.—Up before dawn, the stars still in the sky, the skylarks already singing overhead. We got a good wash in the river, breakfast, packed, and off by

5.15. After following the course of the Aleppo water for an hour we turned off to the right, over an undulating stony country, with low hills for the horizon all round. At 8.20 came to a village called Baruz, built partly of stone, partly of adobe. The village well is deep; the bucket is raised, not by a windlass, but by tacking the rope to a horse and running it straight out over a bar. The water was slightly brackish. A little way on the left was a tumulus, with the village of Ochtarin at its base. Here we entered upon an extensive plain with low hills on the right, and the distant mountain range of Taurus on the north. On the top of a hill on the right was a round building with a conical roof, probably a tomb, with three or four trees grouped round it. Tortoises here and there, beetles hastily rolling their balls of dung out of the way of the horses' hoofs, strange insects, served to interest us till ten. The sun by this time was very hot, and we had had nearly five hours' travelling; we therefore halted on a little rising ground where there was a well like that at Baruz, with camels resting about it. We had the roof of the small tent put up, and lunched. A family, which seemed to hold the well as their own, and to sell its water to travellers, looked to us like Bedowin; but the young fellow said neither his father nor his grandfather knew when their family came into this country, but they knew that they were Turcomans.

Our morning's journey had been over a monotonous country—undulating, barren, featureless, treeless, but I enjoyed it much. To live in the open air, to ride along bridle tracks through a wide, free, unenclosed country, hour after hour, with the mule bells jingling behind; to rise before dawn, and watch the stars fade out of the sky, and the east brighten, and the sun rise; the halt at noon for luncheon, the pleasant bustle of erecting our temporary home in the evening; all this to an adventurous temper, to which a quiet English clergyman's life had

afforded no outlet, is delightful. And these monotonous countries often have a beauty of their own. For example, as I sit under the shade of the tent after lunch, writing up these notes of travel, here is a vast level plain before me, full of lovely colour, stretching to the foot of a range of hills in the far distance, with the peaks of a further range here and there visible. The nearer range, the katurji tells me, is about six hours off, *i.e.*, about eighteen or twenty miles; the more distant range may be thirty miles or more. Look at the colouring of the plain. In the foreground a deeper green and coarser texture, then a band of more tender green; beyond that a broad belt of soil newly turned up by the plough, so red that at first I took it for a patch of poppies; next a patch covered with a weed which looks exactly like lavender in full bloom; then more greens and reds, dashed in with a big brush, sweeping in broad irregular bands across the plain. The distant mountains bound the view with a boldly serrated sky-line. Look again at the plain, for the points of living interest in it. Yonder on the left is the tumulus, with a large village at its base, which we passed this morning; two or three more Koord villages are scattered over the plain; yonder specks, when you look intently, you see are camels feeding; a little cloud of dust shows where a flock of sheep is following its shepherd; a flock of goats crossed the foreground a few minutes ago; and there goes a camel dragging the pack-saddle to which he has been tethered by the head, with strange grotesque contortions. If I could paint well enough here is material for a painting, which might not attract the crowd of visitors to Burlington House—unless, perhaps, I put the camel in the foreground—but which I think would delight the connoisseur.

Started again at 2.30 p.m., and though the sun was very hot there was a pleasant breeze. In an hour came to a village where is the tomb of Choban Beg; annexed to the tomb a little building, in which is a great amphora of

water, that man and beast may drink gratis of the posthumous charity of the good Beg. The mouth of the village well stood high among great stones, and the water was drawn by two young women, not using a windlass, but catching at the rope with their hands, each under the other, with a practised dexterity which soon brought the leather water-bag to the surface. At 7.30 we arrived at the village of Begler-Beg-Coi, where we pitched the tent outside the village, on a natural carpet of green with a pattern of yellow flowers. The sun had just set; the purple of the distant mountains was deepening into black, the week-old moon was already growing bright in the sky, and a planet as bright beside her. How delicious the deep draught of sheep's milk; and how acceptable the dinner of portable soup, cold fowl, jam and bread, and coffee! What a noise the dogs made in the village. How glad we were to lie down on our mattresses and go to sleep, knowing that we had to be up again before dawn next morning!

Monday, May 29.—We were up before dawn. The Bailân men were quite right when they grumbled because I would not get up till four o'clock; we have learned by experience to do better; and accordingly we were up, breakfasted, packed, and off by 4.40, just as the sun was showing above the horizon. At 5.30 we pass a village on the left on the sloping base of a tumulus. At 7.30 ford the Little Sejoor, which they tell us comes from Aintab. For two and a half hours we ride across a plain with low hills, and at nine come suddenly on the Great Sejoor, a tolerably full brook, with a quick flowing turbid stream five to eight yards wide. We ford the brook at the head of a rapid, and halt for luncheon on the other side. Resumed our journey, and rode over undulating country deeply seamed by gullies, worn by the winter torrents from the neighbouring hills. In the afternoon we approached a cultivated country with olive-trees and vine-

yards on the hillsides, and corn in the valley. Descended into the valley and camped for the night at a considerable village, with a ruined mosque and good minaret, which we photographed.

Tuesday, May 30.—We resolved to make one stage into Biridejik, and accordingly rising before three o'clock, were ready to start at four o'clock. Little credit is due to us for the early rising, for the barking of the village dogs, the croaking of the frogs in the stream just below, and the attacks of a legion of insects made us glad to get away. We started at once, leaving the caravan to follow at its own pace, and had a very pleasant morning's ride, especially the earlier part of it. The country was like an average bit of any hilly English county; the hillsides were thickly planted with olive-trees; the level ground had large patches of vineyard, and some unusually good crops of wheat and barley, so that the country had a rich, well-cultivated look, in pleasant contrast with the barren wolds and stony hill-sides we had been riding over for days.

After about three hours we came to a large village, and at the zaptieh's suggestion rode into it, and pulling up at the village coffee-house, dismounted, and drank a cup of coffee each, while the people gradually crowded round to see their European guests. We heard the music of a wedding as we entered the village, and as we rode out of it across the cemetery we saw them digging a grave.

Two hours further we reached the top of a long gentle descent, and came in sight of our destination. At the foot of the slope runs "the fourth river, which is Euphrates"—"the great river, the river Euphrates." Far away to the north, *i.e.*, on our left, was a range of high mountains, with a good deal of snow in patches and streaks about their summits. A broad reach of the Euphrates gleamed under the sun on our right, and in front beyond the river was the city of Biridejik. We rode down to the river-side

and took shelter under a great solitary tree until our caravan came up, that we might all be ferried over together.

There was an extensive cemetery on this side the river—the city of the living on one side, the city of the dead on the other, with the symbolical river between. There was a tumbledown building among the graves, which we were told was a religious house and place of pilgrimage. We ought to have been able to obtain some sort of refreshment here, but the chief had gone across to the city to lay in stores, and the half-naked negro in charge could give us nothing but water, and a narghile for those who cared for it. I assumed from the maps that we were upon or very near the site of the city of Zeugma, once an outpost of the Roman power.

The view before us was worthy of study. The Euphrates here is a broad, full, strong stream, and the wide sandy margin showed that after rains it spreads far beyond its usual bed, and must then present a formidable river to ford. The ground on the opposite side of the river rises at once into bold hills, fantastically moulded and seamed by the rains. A row of houses lines the water's edge, and the town rises steeply up the hill behind them. On the left, on an isolated rock, stand the ruins of an extensive and strong castle; groves, vineyards, and gardens surround the city. It is the ancient city of Apamæa we are looking at, the frontier town of Mesopotamia.

When our caravan arrived it marched straight down to the water's edge, and signalling to the ferryman on the other side, we proceeded at once to cross the river. There were a number of ferry-boats—half a dozen or so—moored on the opposite side, two of which came over to fetch our numerous party. They are very curious examples of shipbuilding: in shape like the fore-part of great ancient lofty-prowed galleys which have been cut in two amidships; built of short, broad, irregularly-shaped slabs of wood, rather than planks, nailed on anyhow, as if the

original boat had been patched and patched till it was all patches. With a little jibbing and plunging we got our horses aboard; the clumsy ark was thrust off into the stream, and drifted rapidly down, while the boatmen with great rude sculls steered a diagonal course, which in a few minutes brought us alongside a narrow wharf at the lower end of the town.

W. and I landed and rode off through the skirts of the town, with the zaptieh, to see the camping-ground he proposed for us. Half-way up the hill he reined in his horse, turned round in the saddle, pointing out the place where we stood with a wave of the hand and a self-satisfied air, as if challenging our admiration for a paradise of a camping-ground. It was a small platform of limestone, nearly surrounded by an amphitheatre of limestone rocks, hot as a baker's oven, and blinding with the glare of the sun reflected from floor and sides. We replied to our guide's look of self-satisfaction with a shrug of the shoulders and an emphatic shake of the head. The katurji had spoken of a place on the hills, beyond the town, beside the pool which supplies the town with water. We took for granted that it would be a grassy margin decked with flowers and shaded with trees, and we were resolved to push on in search of this pleasant spot. The zaptieh refused to understand, or at least to respond to, our gestures to proceed, so we left him to tell the rest what had become of us, and pushed forward by ourselves. It was one of the bits of our journey which dwell vividly on the memory. Up and up a rough hollow way which wound steeply up the limestone hill, under the intense heat and glare, hot and parched with dust and thirst; up and up till we began to think we must have mistaken our road; when we came at last to a place which—we recognised with dismay—agreed roughly with the katurji's description, though it differed widely from the ideas which that description had suggested to our imagination. We had

traced for some time the narrow watercourse through which the stream rushed down the hill to supply the town ; it brought us at last to the source from which it sprang. But how different from the pleasant pool with a grassy margin, beneath the shade of trees, in a hollow of the mountains, which we had pictured to ourselves ! It was a shallow, marshy, rush-grown reservoir, in the bare limestone table-land, without a blade of verdure or a patch of shade. Here we must wait till the caravan should come up—if, indeed, that stupid zaptieh did not persuade them to encamp in his amphitheatre of heat and glare. I looked in vain for a shelter from the pitiless sun ; there was not a rock, there was not a shrub. So at last I sat on the ground and gathered myself into the smallest possible compass, and made my sunshade cover as much of me as it would, and waited with what resignation I could, understanding better than ever before the Scripture simile of “ the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.”

The caravan came up in an hour or so, and we were soon under the welcome shade of the tent.

In the evening clouds gathered over the sky, a strong wind arose, and we had a blustering night. I had considerable fears for the safety of our tent, for the rocky ground afforded bad holding for the tent pegs, and some of the ropes were tied to large stones instead of being fastened into the ground ; but everything held fast, and we passed the night in safety.

CHAPTER VI.

BIRIDEJIK TO URFA.

Wednesday, May 31.—Started at 5.45 and rode through the morning, up hill and down dale, leaving the caravan to follow at its leisure.

In the bottom between two low hills was a well, where we halted for a draught of water, and to wait the arrival of our caravan, which we had outridden.

The whole neighbourhood, so far as we could see, was barren and uninhabited, but there were two Koords at the well who seemed to claim a right of property in it. One was a frank-looking young fellow, but the other was a short, strongly-built fellow, with a low brow and villanous countenance, and both armed with pistol and dagger. Had I been a lonely traveller, I should have thought twice before I drew rein and asked for a drink of water from their well. But though we had left our caravan behind, we were three in number, and two of us, at least, well enough armed to feel at our ease. The well seemed shallow, and the water, brought up in a leathern bag instead of a bucket, was muddy; it seemed as if the well was only a subterranean reservoir into which some spring slowly collected. Beside the well were three or four shallow troughs of hard-beaten earth, into which the water was poured from the leathern bag, and flowed from one to the other, gradually depositing its sediment. We took a draught or two from the last and clearest, and lay down on the hill-side to wait for our caravan.

Presently our zaptieh rode up, and, after a short parley, the frank-looking young Koord jumped upon one of our

horses and set off, at as great a pace as he could get out of the horse, round the shoulder of the hill. Had we been alone I should have thought the right course was to jump on the other horse and race after him pistol in hand ; under all the circumstances I lay still and waited the event. After a quarter of an hour's absence we saw him slowly returning, bearing a great bowl in his hand ; just at the same time our caravan came up and supplied us with bread to eat with the bowl of milk our young Koord had brought us.

While we were enjoying our luncheon, quite unexpectedly, round the shoulder of the hill streamed flocks of sheep, goats, cows, women, and girls, and within two or three minutes the desolate well was the scene of an act in a patriarchal pastoral drama. The cattle hastened to the water-troughs, the men filled and emptied their leathern bag of water into the troughs, the women pelted intrusive cows with stones and made way for their sheep and goats. At length the cattle were satisfied, the men left their well and began to chat with the women, and the women to laugh and chat with the men ; they looked at the strangers but did not come near them, and they were still there when we got into our saddles again and continued our journey.

In the evening we came to a large caravanserai, with a mosque on the opposite side of the road, a well close by, and, just beyond, a small stream creeping through the sandy soil. We declined the caravanserai and pitched our tent beyond the stream. The sheik of the neighbouring village, a big broad Turk, came to pay his respects to us, and when he left sent us a present of milk and butter. A small party of travellers passed at a little distance—a gentleman in Turkish uniform, a taktaravan, *i.e.*, a litter carried by two horses, baggage horses, and servants. They also eschewed the caravanserai, but erected their tents under the shelter of its eastern wall. Presently the gentleman, attended by his servant, came across to pay us

a visit. He turned out to be an army surgeon from Bagdad, going on leave to Constantinople. While conversing with him, I saw through the tent door that the horizon to the south-west grew overcast with a lurid haze; presently came a gust of wind, bringing with it a shower of fine sand, and I recognised that it was a sand-storm sweeping down upon us. We closed the tent, and I laid hold of the canvas and lent my weight to aid the straining ropes, trying at the same time to keep up a conversation with our guest. But it was of no use; the tent-pegs were in sandy soil and had little hold. An extra gust, a crash, and over went our canvas house, burying us all beneath its walls. Fortunately no one was hurt; we crept from under the fluttering canvas, and stood on it to prevent its being blown away. Our guest laughed at my apologies for our inhospitable treatment, and sent off his servant to fetch some very large tent-pegs from his own stores, with which the people soon got up our smaller tent, to which we adjourned the conversation.

Thursday, June 1.—After our last night's adventure I was tired, and slept badly. The tent put up hurriedly in the storm did not fit, and left two openings, through which, however, entered nothing worse than the cats, who ran over us unceremoniously, and stole the pair of fowls which had been cooked ready for to-day's dinner; consequently I did not rise till four, and we did not get clear off till 5.45.

We had a long morning's ride over a country like parts of Wales, or the fells of Westmoreland, till 11.15, when we stopped to lunch at a Koord village close by extensive ancient ruins. The only walls left standing surround a quadrangular space, and may be a comparatively recent structure built out of the old materials. The stones, it is true, are very large and not easily moved without machinery; but one of them has some moulding upon it, another has apparently formed the lintel of a doorway,

and this raises the supposition that the rest also are not in their original situation. There is a very large subterranean cistern, L-shaped in plan; one limb of the L is covered with a semicircular vault of massive stones, and has a stone stair leading down into it; the other limb of the L looks as if the excavators had come upon a natural cavern and had taken advantage of it to enlarge their reservoir. It is still half full of water, and supplies the neighbouring village and its cattle. There is also a large chamber excavated in the rock with rude niches in the sides as if for lamps, one recess large enough for a bed; and there are two large square shallow tanks sunk in the floor on one side. Similar chambers with similar features occur in some of the ruined Syrian cities, and are said by M. de Vogüé to have been kitchens. Another chamber is excavated with a rude arched section, outside the entrance several crosses are rudely incised into the rock, and pieces of rock are left projecting like rude bas-reliefs (but we could detect no trace of design in them). There are also several of the subterranean excavations with circular plan and domical elevation with a well-hole at the summit, which we have conjectured to be store chambers for corn. Perhaps the most interesting remains are a group of graves under the ridge of rock eastward of the city. They are all dug in the rock, and five or six of the large massive coverings still remain, of the usual fifth and sixth century type. One grave had a *loculus* on each side, another seemed a single grave. Some stone coffins appeared partly above ground, and probably carved out of rocks which projected above the surface. The ancient name, the Koords told us, was Kufia, the modern village is Kara Sukou. The Koords of the village, when asked who used to live in the ruined city, replied Nimrod and Abraham. Nimrod and Abraham are the heroes of the popular legends here, as Arthur or Robin Hood in England. These ruins are worth a

more careful examination than we were able to bestow upon them. They seem to be of the same character and age as the ruined cities of Central Syria.

A good many loose volcanic stones lie on the surface of the ground, especially on the first descent after leaving Kufia. Soon after the scenery became bolder, the hills loftier and steeper, ribs of limestone showing through the hillsides and cresting their tops. The track rises steeply towards the summit of the hills before us. Nearly at the top we come to a fine ancient fountain. A large subterranean chamber excavated in the rock is roofed with massive horizontal stones overlapping one another in the earliest form of the arch. In the floor at one end of this subterranean chamber the excavation is carried still deeper to form a reservoir, which a spring keeps filled with good cold water. There are steps down at each end, so that the traveller may ride his horse down at one end and rest there, or foot passengers may descend at the nearer end straight to the water.

From this point the scenery becomes still bolder and more wild, and the horse track ascends steeply through a narrow pass, with traces of an ancient road here and there. A bold rocky ravine runs down to our left, but we still ascend, and find our road pass through a cutting in the ridge at the summit of the hill, which forms a rocky gateway easily defensible. On the further side the road plunges down a deep rocky ravine, along the bottom of which runs a mountain torrent, towards the city of Urfa, which is a little beyond. Immediately on passing through the rocky gateway we find traces of a work partly cut in the rock, which must have been an ancient fort; and there are other traces round about of habitations, partly or wholly formed out of the rock, which may have housed the garrison stationed in this strong fort to defend the western approach to the ancient city of Edessa, the capital of the kingdom of Osrhoëne.



THE MOSQUE OF ABRAHAM AT URFA.

(From a Photograph.)

The Head is that of a Dervish.



CHAPTER VII.

URFA.

ITS natural advantages must have attracted a population to the site of Urfa from the earliest times. Its chief advantage is a copious and beautiful fountain of water which springs in the hollow between two spurs of the mountain of Jebel Nimrood. This is situated at the corner of a fine fertile plain ; it is defended on the west by the mountains, and is accessible on that side only by the pass which we have described.

The local traditions claim for it that it was one of the

cities of the first monarchy—Ur of the Chaldees—and associate the names of Nimrod and Abraham with the natural features of the locality and the most striking antiquities of the city. The writer on Urfa in Smith's "Bible Dictionary," however, disputes the claim of Urfa to this distinction, and gives reasons for believing that Ur was in Chaldea Proper—the low country near the Persian Gulf—and that Mugheir has "the best claim, and is entitled to be (at least provisionally) regarded as the city of Abraham." The Greeks called the famous fountain by the name of Callirhoen, and built a city on the ancient site, which they called Antioch, in honour of Antiochus; and to distinguish it from the other cities of the same name the distinguishing affix Antioch ad Callirhoen was given to it. In the time of our Lord it was commonly known as Edessa, and was the capital of the little kingdom of Osrhoëne, ruled by a race of kings who were called by the dynastic name of Abgarus.

One of the earliest legends of Christianity is connected with Edessa. Eusebius, the historian of the early Church, relates that King Abgarus sent messengers with a letter to our Lord, who wrote him a letter in reply. Eusebius quotes the documents, which, he says, were found in the public archives at Edessa. Modern historians reject the documents as unauthentic. "Whether the story is founded in any degree on truth we have no means of determining. All that is certain is, that Christianity was early diffused in this country." * A little later than the time of Eusebius we find an addition to the legend. Abgarus, it was said, commissioned a painter to take the likeness of our Lord, but, dazzled by the glory of His countenance, he gave up the attempt, whereupon the Saviour Himself impressed His image on a piece of linen, and sent it to the king. Procopius tells us that our Lord was believed to have promised that Edessa should be impregnable. The posses-

* Neander, "Church History," i., 110. Bohn's Ed.

sion of the picture and the promise of impregnability were connected together in the popular mind ; and when Chosroes besieged the city advantage was taken of this popular belief ; the miraculous picture was said to be discovered built up in a wall ; its recovery excited a fearless enthusiasm ; the place was bravely defended, and the great king was obliged to raise the siege. After the conclusion of the war under Marcus Aurelius between the Roman and Parthian empires the Romans built forts and left garrisons to secure the fidelity of the Osrhoëne princes ; and Caracalla finally reduced it to the rank of a province, conferring on Edessa the dignity of a colony.

The city is specially interesting in the history of the Nestorians. There was a flourishing school here in the early part of the fifth century, " the Athens of Syria," of which Ibas was the head. In this school were trained a body of clergy for the Persian Church. Ibas was of the same theological school as the great theologians of Antioch—Diodorus and Theodoret—and translated their works into Syriac. Ibas maintained the orthodoxy of Nestorius, and the students who were sent forth were imbued with the same theological opinions, so that Edessa was the seminary of Nestorianism.

In the history of the Crusades Edessa occupies a prominent position. As the first crusade was slowly forcing its way across Asia Minor, the Christian prince of Edessa sent to ask the aid of one of its chiefs. Baldwin accepting the prince's offer to adopt him as his heir, in return for his assistance, left the crusading army in spite of the remonstrances of the other princes, and marched straight to Edessa. The men of Edessa rose against their king and killed him, whereupon Baldwin at once succeeded to his power (A.D. 1097), and the kingdom of Osrhoëne, under the name of the County of Edessa, formed one of the feudal constituents of the kingdom of Jerusalem. When the Saracens conquered the other

Christian possessions in the East, Edessa still maintained its independence, until, in 1144, Zenghis, Prince of Mosul and Aleppo, after a siege of twenty-five days, stormed the place, with a frightful slaughter of the inhabitants, and utterly destroyed the city. It was this last calamity which roused Europe to the undertaking of the second crusade.

As we approached the city we saw two rocky ridges, spurs of the mountain we had left behind, with a hollow between them. In this hollow, luxuriant with groves and gardens, rises the fountain of Callirhoe. The northern ridge on our left is crowned with a long line of mediæval wall, strengthened with towers; it descends into the hollow, and is lost among the groves, and re-appears ascending the hill to the right, where it joins the defences of the imposing castle which crowns the southern hill. The town of Urfa occupies the slopes of these hills and the hollow between them.

We entered by a gateway beside the castle, whose walls towered above us, and found that our camping-place was an orchard of well-grown mulberry-trees at the foot of the castle rock, beside a large tank of running water. If the ground had been covered with turf the site would have been perfect, but it was bare earth; if the orchard had been private it would have added to the tranquillity of our resting-place, but the enclosure, with its shady trees and fair water, formed one of the public playgrounds of the Edessans. We gained, however, in exchange for privacy, a constant succession of pictures of Edessan costume and manners.

It is almost sacred ground, if we may believe the legends of the place. For on looking up to the castle, towering over its mediæval walls may be seen two great pillars with Corinthian capitals, upon one of which a stork has built her nest. The legend says that these form part of a machine from which King Nimrod hurled

Abraham into the fire kindled down here in the hollow where the great tank is. But the fire was miraculously changed into water and the faggots of the fire into fish, and Abraham escaped unhurt. The tank is full of fish—carp, I think—which are considered sacred, and are never caught. On the contrary, it is an act of piety to feed them, and the visitor can buy parched maize for the purpose on the spot. We rested our first afternoon and evening under the pleasant shade beside the refreshing water, and amused ourselves by feeding the fish. They swarmed in the water, and when a handful of corn was thrown in they rushed upon it so that for a space of four or five cubic feet there was nothing but a dense mass of struggling fish, while shoals of others were hastening up from all quarters. None of them were very large; I suspect the seniors do not condescend to join in a public scramble for maize. We sent our interpreter in the evening with the zaptieh to report our safe arrival, and convey our compliments to the pasha. I was sorry afterwards that we did not go ourselves, for our messenger found the pasha not at the Serai, but in the camp outside the town, where in a temporary theatre a fête was in progress, at which the civil and military officials were present. He sent polite messages, and four kavasses to take care of us and do us honour. It was a glorious night, with a brilliant moon; and our white tents under the shade of the trees, the castle on one side, the water of Abraham on the other, made a beautiful picture. Venus, too, was visible, larger and more brilliant than I ever saw planet before. The minarets of the town were illuminated, each with a circle of lamps round its gallery, which twinkled through the trees and added to the charm of the evening.

June 2.—We rose early in order to utilise the cool part of the day, and paid our first visit to the castle. It is built on the summit of the ridge, and, following the exigencies of the site, is long and narrow. The outer walls

are very perfect, and the whole external appearance very imposing, but the interior is a mere mass of ruins; considerable pains must have been taken to reduce the interior to such a wreck while the outer walls are still so perfect. Two or three small portions of the building are still partially standing, but not enough to afford any indication of the original plan of the castle. The opening of the castle well is still visible, which must have descended to a great depth. The moat is a remarkable work. On the north side the rock descends very abruptly down to the margin of the water of Abraham, and this side was within the defences of the town. But on the other three sides a deep and wide trench has been hewn out of the solid rock, making an absolutely impassable gulf between the exterior world and the foot of the castle wall, which rises from the internal edge of this formidable moat. In one place a needle of rock has been left, rising out of the middle of the moat, as if to support a narrow drawbridge by which a postern might give egress to the country; the principal entrance is on the town side.

We examined with great interest the two fine columns which have already been incidentally mentioned. Each stands on a separate square plinth; they are of considerable diameter, built up of segmental stones, the alternate stones having bosses left projecting. There is an inscription in Cufic (*i.e.*, ancient Syriac) characters on one, but, alas! we were unable to read, or to make a satisfactory copy of it.* I do not pretend to any knowledge of classical

* Dr. Badger gives a copy of the inscription, Vol. i. p. 323, and says it is in the Estrangheli, or old Syriac character, but so defaced that he was not able fully to decipher it. "Neither the language nor the character is pure Syriac. The former appears to be mixed with Arabic words, and the latter with Hebrew letters. The subjoined is an attempt to translate the original, the true signification of which I shall leave to the more learned to decide: '*I Aftch Neh . . . the son of . . . the son of . . . —shert . . . this pillar . . . Hadrianta of the world . . . was surrendered by the queen, the daughter of Maako . . .*'" *

* *Maako*, among the Jacobites and Armenians of Urfa, means Margaret.

antiquities, but the impression left on my mind was that these remarkable and very perfect columns were of Roman character. If they are a mere remnant of a colonnade the building of which they formed part must have been on a very grand scale ; but they may have been twin monumental columns, erected here in memory of some persons or event which perhaps the inscription might explain. In a tower in the upper part of the castle are built in several stones, carved in a bold and fine style with vine foliage and classical mouldings, which might very well have formed parts of a cornice which would match with the Corinthian pillars.

After breakfast we paid a visit to the French Consul, whom we found recovering from an attack of the fever of the country. From him we learnt that the official fête last night and the illumination of the mosques was in celebration of the accession of Sultan Mourad, *vice* Abdul Aziz Effendi dethroned. The revolution seemed to be accepted with great indifference. The people of Turkey are not politicians in our sense of the word. It is race and religion which divide men here into hostile parties.

From him we went to pay our respects to the pasha. We found nothing to impress us with a sense of Eastern magnificence. The Serai, or Government House, is a large barrack-like building, with a barren square, like a parade ground, in front. We were ushered into a room, with bare floor and plain walls, a table, behind which the pasha sat in an arm-chair, and a couch at his left hand, to which he welcomed his visitors. He received us politely, but without ceremony, and chatted with us on various indifferent subjects. Finding that we were interested in antiquities, he took us out into the courtyard to show us a sculptured stone which had lately been discovered, and of which he allowed us to take a photograph. It seems to be a sepulchral stone, with the head of a man in low relief, with whiskers and moustache, and Phrygian bonnet, and an inscription on the right-hand side of the stone. He also

took us through his stables to show us a Cufic inscription, built into the wall at the back of the Serai, overhanging the city moat on the north of the town. I could make nothing of the inscription, but I was glad of the opportunity of seeing the stables. It was a long building, clean and sweet, and in excellent order, with a great stone basin of water at one end. About ten or a dozen fine-looking horses were tightly tethered by the head and the hind heel. When I expressed a conjecture that the fragment of sculptured stone which he had shown us might be the missing portion of a stone which is said to exist at the Papal convent, the pasha politely pressed upon me a horse and guide to take me across the city to see it. But I was unwilling to take my companions the journey on foot through the increasing heat of the day, and reluctantly declined his courtesy.

We devoted the remainder of this day and two following days to seeing the city and its antiquities.

The Oloor Jamesi, like several other of the Urfa mosques, was originally a Christian church. A large courtyard, with a fountain in the middle, was probably the atrium of the basilica. Ranged round the fountain, and in a row on the north side of the court, are a series of capitals of columns, of debased classical character, which perhaps are the débris of the colonnade which surrounded this atrium. In the east corner of the court is a square tower, whose upper stage is carried into a hexagonal lantern. It is now used as the minaret of the mosque, but we were allowed to ascend it. The view of the city and the surrounding country was fine. We took a photograph from this elevation, and a stork, standing on one leg on the top of a neighbouring minaret, was obliging enough to stand still to have his portrait included in the picture.

The mosque of Ibrahim (Abraham) is a handsome building, and with its attached buildings and gardens surrounds three sides of a large tank, the fourth side being open to

the public street. We were able to take a photograph of this, from which the woodcut at the head of this Chapter is taken.

The city is well built of stone, the bazaars extensive and busy, and full of untiring interest. The town seems a thriving place ; it has some manufactures ; it exports wool, Alexandretta being its nearest port. The country round is very fruitful, and since there is no market for its produce except the town, all the necessaries of life are cheap.

The evenings were very pleasantly spent in our orchard. It was always lively ; people came to sit by the water and smoke, some bathed ; the soldiers brought their horses to wash, and since the latter all refused to take the water there was a series of combats, in which excited men tried to force the frightened animals into the water. The groups of man and horse in vehement action and statuesque attitudes were sometimes worthy of the chisel of the artist of the Toro Farnese. One man interested me very much, a dervish, habited in a scanty white tunic, with bare head and feet, black hair cut short over the forehead, and falling in massive locks on his shoulders, with fine features, dark, dreamy eyes, and a remarkable expression—grave yet kindly, dignified yet simple, the very model of a John the Baptist. Dervish as he is, he acts as attendant at the coffee-house at the entrance to our orchard, and it is strangely incongruous to see such a man handing a cup of coffee, or carrying a coal to light a narghile.

In the evening of June 2nd there were flashes of intense white blinding lightning, rolls of thunder, and a smart shower.

Our duty led us to pay a visit to the Armenian bishop, Gregorius. Another elder bishop was with him ; priests and gentlemen came in and gradually filled the divan, which ran round three sides of the room ; a group of servants stood and listened to the conversation at the lower end.

After presenting our credentials and delivering our mes-

sage of sympathy and good-will from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the prelates of the ancient Churches of the East, and receiving complimentary replies, the conversation turned upon the state of religion and education among the Armenians. Here it is perhaps right to say that the gentleman who acted as interpreter, and who also took an independent part in the conversation, was the chief agent in Urfa of the American missionaries of Aintab, an intelligent Armenian partly educated in Germany. What was said about the Church may have been a little coloured by the medium through which it came. I gathered that the Armenian Church was an inactive institution, but that there was a growing desire for education and for ecclesiastical reforms, and that some progress was already being made, chiefly through the pressure of the more intelligent laity upon the hierarchy. The chief difficulty in the way of progress was said to be the use of old Armenian—a dead language—not only in the services of the Church, but also as the basis of the education given in the schools. The number of Armenians in Urfa is between ten and eleven thousand, of whom, I was told, perhaps 125 can read and write. There are six schools at work, one of them recently built; but there is a great want of books and apparatus, trained teachers, and a better syllabus of subjects.

In crossing the cemetery to the church I noticed that many of the gravestones have no inscription, but incised symbols of the trade of the deceased, like our old English gravestones—*e.g.*, I noted scissors for a tailor, a shoe for a shoemaker, a hammer and anvil for a blacksmith, &c.

The church is a large modern building, erected in 1846, with three aisles, and galleries round three sides for the women. There is an altar at the east end of each aisle. The altar is elevated on a narrow platform, about four feet high. The bishop's chair is at the north-west corner of the choir, facing east. The east end is rather showily decorated, and there are religious pictures hung round the

church; one of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Child is of the usual Byzantine type, of embossed metal, with painted faces; a lamp was burning before it. They were in the middle of service when we entered. Four or five priests seated in a row inside the choir-screen facing east, and four or five boys in white albs, forming the choir.

In the absence of the Jacobite bishop we visited the priest in charge, who received us very cordially, and showed us over his church. It is quite modern and fairly handsome, with pointed-arched vaulting and Saracenic architectural ornament in pillars and doorways. On a narrow platform at the east end, about four feet high, are several altars, each with a step in front for the celebrant. There is a daily celebration, and part of a host is reserved in a covered ciborium, kept in the tabernacle over the high altar, for the sick. Two books of the Gospels were interesting—one folio, the other quarto—both with silver covers of ancient Byzantine type. The MS. enclosed in the folio cover is quite modern, written in double columns—one column in ancient Syriac, the other a translation into Arabic language written in Syriac characters. The quarto MS. was dated about the middle of the fifteenth century. Among the altar plate in the sacristy were five or six chalices, one enamelled, two with porcelain cups set in the usual silver stand. There was a double-headed bishop's staff, the volutes being of serpents, and like our Saxon style of design; a single-headed crook of more modern type; several hand crosses, one jewelled; censers; sets of vestments, &c. There is a patriarchal veil set with plates and bosses of silver. The patriarch does not wear a mitre but a veil on his head, which is thrown off at the reading of the Gospel.

The Jacobites have one school, containing about 100 children, the eldest of them about twelve years old, and one teacher. The course of instruction is first the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Psalter, by rote, in the old

Syriac ; and at about eleven or twelve years old, if the children continue in school till then, the meaning is explained in modern Syriac.

I had a visit from the teacher of the Armenian Protestant body in connection with the American mission at Aintab, the gentleman who acted as interpreter on my visit to the Armenian bishop. I gathered from him, and others who accompanied him, that the eyes of the reforming party in the Armenian Church are directed towards the Church of England, and that they would gladly receive help and direction from that quarter. The thoughts of my interlocutors, however, took the shape of a Church of England schism from the Armenian Church, and I had to explain to them that the Armenian Church would have our best wishes in any endeavours to reform itself and educate its people, but that the Church of England would not lend itself to any endeavours to proselytise from the Armenian Church and establish a sect outside it.*

* These are some statistics of Urfa : population in 1876 :—

Mussulmans.....	15,400
Christians..... ..	13,500
Jews.....	310
	29,210

Old Armenian	11,600
Jacobite Syrian.....	1,500

A few Armenian Catholics, and a few Chaldeans (Papal Nestorians), and about 300 Armenian Protestants, who have no distinct plan of worship.

CHAPTER VIII.

URFA TO DIARBEKR.

Saturday, June 3.—It is always impossible on a first start to get off early in the morning. So as the weather was intensely hot we resolved not to attempt to start until evening, and to travel in the night. We started at 5.30, nearly dinner time, and were so unwise as not to dine before we started.

We rode through an undulating country, cultivated but tame. About an hour's ride brought us to a village, Kara Kupri (?) Coi, Blackbridge village, situated on an eminence in the middle of a valley. It was surrounded by gardens, fields, and trees, and looked pleasant in contrast with the monotonous, treeless character of the rest of the journey. We horsemen had ridden on ahead of the caravan, a proceeding against which the leading horse of the caravan protested as an infringement of his honour of precedence. Accordingly he trotted after us, leaving his more contented companions behind; but his trotting loosened his load; presently down it came, part of it still connected by a rope with the pack-saddle, and we had the pleasure of seeing our belongings dragged along the rough path, as martyrs used to be dragged at horses' heels in the days of persecution. Clouds began to gather about the sunset, with strong colours of gold and red and murky purple. The hills too were richly coloured by the level rays; and we found that part of the monotonous effect of the scenery is owing not only to the absence of trees and cultivation, but to the atmospheric conditions,

to the strong glare of the sunlight which pours straight down upon it nearly all day long, to the consequent absence of shadows, and to the absence of ærial perspective due to the dryness of the air. The clouds began to look wild and stormy. The short twilight faded and the moon was obscured by clouds. We plodded on in the growing darkness. A smart shower fell, and then a whirlwind suddenly rushed upon us from behind, densely charged with sand and dust. The zaptieh, leading, turned his horse off the path into the field, and we followed, half suffocated with the sand. The atmosphere thickened and the darkness was complete. I could not see my leader, and let the horse take his own course. Fortunately the storm did not last many minutes, how many I cannot tell—minutes seem very long under such circumstances; we crossed the brow of the hill we had been ascending, and either the hill sheltered us, or more probably we had got beyond the path of the storm. The air slowly cleared and I caught the outline of our guide, and had the satisfaction of knowing that I had not strayed out of the way. For hours we journeyed on in the dark, intensified by the splendid lightning which flashed frequently out of the banks of cloud. We did not get to our stage till near midnight, exhausted more from want of food perhaps than from fatigue; got stiffly out of the saddle, walked three or four paces out of reach of the horses' hoofs, lay down on the ground and fell asleep on the instant. The small tent was pitched, some soup and cold fowl got ready, and we were waked to eat; after a few mouthfuls, which we ate half-asleep, we lay down on our mattresses and slept heavily again till morning.

Sunday, June 4.—We spent the day quietly where we were. It was a cloudy day with a pleasant breeze, and we enjoyed the quiet out-door life. The scene, too, was pleasant, in the main undulating chalk downs; our tents were pitched beside a pond, Ras-el-ayn (the Foun-

tain-head); opposite was a lofty tell, one of the great sepulchral mounds which abound all along the road from here to Mosul. To the right a natural hill crowned with a circle of trees. The high-road ran between the pond and the tell, and people were coming and going now and then on horses, asses, camels, among them a family of Turkish gypsies, for the country abounds in gypsies. In the morning we saw a Koord shepherd with his flock on the side of the tell; he stood before them and played to them on his pipe, and then walked away still playing, while they slowly followed him. The shepherd's pipe, then, of Theocritus and Virgil and Spenser, was not a poetical invention.

What a profusion of life is nourished by the pool. Every stone in it has a turtle squatted on it with his head cocked up in the air. As we walk round the margin multitudes of green-throated frogs leap from under our feet and splash into the water; rustlings through the flags tell us of other creatures also—rats, perhaps—stealthily getting out of the way of the human intruders into their little world. Myriads of insects hover over the water; swallows skim its surface; great water-flags and many flowers grow round the margin.

The zaptieh amused himself and benefited us by catching fish. He made, with turf and stones, a little bay, with a narrow entrance, in one corner of the pool, and went away and waited. I suppose the fish flocked to the turbid water in search of food; and when a shoal of them were fairly in his trap, the fisherman stole rapidly forward, closed the opening with a turf, and using his hands for a landing net, flung the fish out upon the grass; they afforded us an acceptable dish at dinner.

At sunset the clouds again were very fine, and the most wonderful golden glow was thrown over the downs with their chalky hollows, and especially over the tell standing out conspicuously in the middle distance.

Monday, June 5.—At 10 o'clock at night we resumed

our journey. The moon was struggling among the clouds, and we did not see much of the country we passed through, only its broad general outlines and its nearer features. Probably we did not lose much; the country seemed to consist of low hills, with partial cultivation in the shallow valleys between them. From midnight till one we were in a pass through the hills, in places narrow and rocky; it was a bit of romance to ride through such a place at midnight by the light of a clouded moon, with a wild-looking Turk for guide, and a caravan of pack-horses following.

About sunrise (4 o'clock) we came upon a plain, bounded on the north side by a semicircle of mountains with fine bold outlines. Our course ran across the plain towards the opposite end of the semicircle. At 7.30 we arrived at the village of Mishmish. We camped in a narrow winding gully with rocky sides and a grassy bottom, through which flowed a good sized stream; there were some trees along the valley, and some caves in the rocks, which helped to make up a pleasant camping-place, where we rested through the heat of the day.

Every course has its advantages and disadvantages. If you travel by night you must rest by day, and the disadvantage of resting by day is—the flies. They tease the horses so that they do not get proper rest; they tease the travellers too. When you eat, three, four, or half a dozen flies settle on the morsel while you raise it from your plate to your lips, and dispute it with you, and it requires skilful and prompt manœuvring to get it safely into your mouth. When you lie down to sleep they settle on your face, and when at last you have succeeded in covering your face so as to leave no loop-hole, they settle on your feet and sting you through your socks. It is because they will not let me sleep that I am now writing about them. I suppose it has always been so in these countries. The Nimrood sculptures represent the king as accompanied

always by an attendant bearing a fan of the kind which is still used in the country to brush away the flies.

It must have been hereabouts that Beelzebub, the Lord of the Flies, put it into the head of one of his votaries to put a martyr to death by smearing his naked body with honey and leaving him to be stung to death by the flies and other insects. Not that I mean any disrespect to the flies when I incidentally allude to the instigator of evil as the Lord of Flies. I recognise the valuable use they serve in the economy of creation. They are the minute scavengers of what would otherwise be noxious. All I complain of is that they should mistake two respectable and inoffensive English travellers for noxious matter to be scavenged out of existence. Poor creatures, they pay the penalty. In the evening when the katurjis come to pack up the tent, the upper part of its interior and of the pole are black with them; there is no help for it, they get rolled up in the rough, heavy folds, and in the morning only a small proportion of them survive to plague anybody.

Tuesday, June 6.—We left Mishmish by moonlight, and rode through the moonlight night seven hours over an undulating plain. This brought us to the town of Suarek. We camped near the well at the foot of the mound, on which are still some small remains of fortification. The kaimakam was exceedingly polite. He sent five zaptiehs (in addition to the one who travelled with us) to take care of us, for which high compliment we expressed our grateful acknowledgments. But soon after he sent five more! We sent these back with a polite message, thanking the kaimakam for his solicitude, but expressing a fear that we could not “guarantee the safety” of all ten. Perhaps it was a poor joke, and the reader will not understand it without explanation. These zaptiehs are useful as guides, and as showing that the traveller is under the special cognisance and safeguard of the authorities, and in bargaining with the villagers on the

route, but the traveller must not place much confidence in their protection in case of an attack. The consul at Aleppo told us that on one occasion he was travelling through a district disturbed just then by the Arabs, and the kaimakam tried to dissuade him from continuing his journey; when the consul persisted, the kaimakam insisted upon sending with him all the soldiers he had at hand. On the way a group of horsemen was seen in the distance; the soldiers halted and held a council of war; the result of which was that their officer told the consul they must decline to go any further unless he could "guarantee their safety." The consul laughed at them, and rode forward; the soldiers "guaranteed their own safety" by riding back. Happily the strangers were friendly Arabs, and the consul got through without further adventure. This was the story we had in mind when we declined "to guarantee the safety" of the ten soldiers sent us.

A little later in the evening the kaimakam sent an officer with three attendants to inquire after our welfare, and to ask if we wanted anything. Wanted anything! I suppose he meant, did we want any more zaptiehs? No, thank you! Did we want anybody bastinadoed? No, thank you. "Want" anything! We wanted a good dinner very much, but we could not tell him so; and we wanted a great many other things which we did not suppose to lie within the intention of the polite inquiry; so we sent a polite reply, and excused ourselves for not being able to visit the kaimakam in person. Our officer declined the usual complimentary coffee, and would not stay to gossip, but took his leave and went about his business like a European.

I had a visit from some Armenians, with whom I had a long and interesting conversation. They gave me the following statistics of Suarek. It contains about 3,000 families, of whom about 2,500 are Mussulman; about 300 Armenian; 30 to 35 Syrian. Protestant about 35 families—

10 families who call themselves Church of England, and who receive an occasional visit from some clergyman (I think from Diarbekr), and 10 Jewish families. I was told that some time ago 150 persons, householders, signed and sealed a letter to a Mr. Phillips, a clergyman at Jerusalem, asking to have a clergyman of the Church of England sent to them.

When our visitors lighted their lantern and departed I threw myself on my mattress, very tired, and was soon asleep. It was a sultry night, and taking advantage of the security afforded by our regiment of guards quartered outside, we left half the side wall of the tent open all night.

Wednesday, June 7.—We rode through the street of Suarek as the day began to dawn; the muezzins were crying the first hour of prayer from the minarets of its three mosques.

There are extensive gardens and vineyards around Suarek, and the country round is partially cultivated. There has also been an attempt to make a road to Diarbekr; it has been macadamised for a mile or two, but as horses and camels prefer the smooth, soft plain to the jagged points of the stones, the road has never got worn down into order; after the first mile or two the stones have been thrown on the road unbroken for another mile or so, and then the attempt has ceased altogether. We pursued our journey over an undulating plain, partially cultivated with "long fields of barley and of rye, which clothe the wold and meet the sky," intersected by several deep watercourses. Any one may get leave to cultivate any of the hundreds of miles of waste land on paying a royalty to the Crown; the barley is for the most part not cut, but fed off in the autumn.

At the end of seven and a half hours' riding I pull up short by a well and decline to go further without rest and refreshment, and it is agreed to camp there for the night.

Two merchants from Karkou (Shushan) and their servants came and asked permission to camp near us, and to join us in our journey, for the sake of protection. They were returning from Stamboul, where they had been in pursuance of their trade; their caravan of camels had gone across the desert, and they were taking the pleasanter way round by the river. Then came a party of men with a taktaravan, a horse litter, returning from Bagdad, whither they had conveyed three Latin priests. Lastly, came two men with a prisoner, a Koord horse-stealer, who had been pursued and caught, and was being carried back in triumph with his booty. It made our camp quite busy, for all these people, when they had made their own arrangements, came and squatted round the door of our tent to gossip. Suddenly there was an outcry and a confusion, and men running hither and thither. What did it all mean? The Koord prisoner had slipped his bonds, and resumed his stolen horse, and ridden off under our very noses. One saw a man quietly walking a horse as if leading him to water, but never thought that anything was wrong. When fairly outside he swung himself into the saddle, and away he went with a fair start, and the open plain to gallop over, and the deep watercourses to hide in, and the night darkening fast. The odds are greatly in his favour.

Thursday, June 8.—Started at 1.30 A.M. Soon began a rugged ascent, which lasted for several hours, and brought us at length to the top of the range of hills, and to a Koord village of black tents, where we were to change our zaptieh. On the south side of a kind of village green the tents were ranged in one long line. A Koord tent is in shape a semi-dome; often they are large and lofty, and always open in front. Two or three horses were picketed in front on the green, brown children in the scantiest of garments played about, and men and women could be seen moving in the twilight about the open tents. The

chief came out to us and invited us to dismount and take some refreshment. We gladly took the opportunity to study the economy of Koordish life. We were conducted to the chief's tent, on the extreme right of the encampment, and something was found for us to sit upon. We found lying on a couch an unhealthy-looking young man, who had come up from town to the hills for the benefit of his health, which he appeared to be trying to re-establish by a course of diligent smoking. We, too, were offered cigarettes while coffee was being prepared. I happened to be seated where I could see the process of preparation. A handful of berries were roasted in a pan over the fire, turned into a mortar, and pounded to a fine powder; put into the coffee biggin with sugar, and boiled up, and served in little Turkish cups. No wonder it was good; for to have the coffee fresh roasted and ground is the secret of good coffee. But the coffee was only intended as a *hors d'œuvre*, for presently in came a large round metal tray with bread, and a great dish of fried eggs and cheese and butter. One dish interested me much—a flat dish of butter, in whose surface dints had been made and filled with honey. The butter was very light in texture, unlike our solid English butter; the honey, too, was thin and aromatic. I learnt to eat the dish native fashion, viz., by breaking off a piece of the native bread, and converting it into a little scoop, with which a little butter is scooped up and dipped into the honey, and the whole conveyed into the expectant mouth. “Butter and honey shall he eat,” says Isaiah, but I did not know before that in combination they form a usual dish of pastoral countries. They told us here of great ruins southward, which they called the Castle of Job. Before we left we watched the young ladies of the family weaving one of the many-coloured rugs for which the Koord looms are famous; the loom was of the most primitive kind, but the jewelled fingers of the young ladies were skilful,

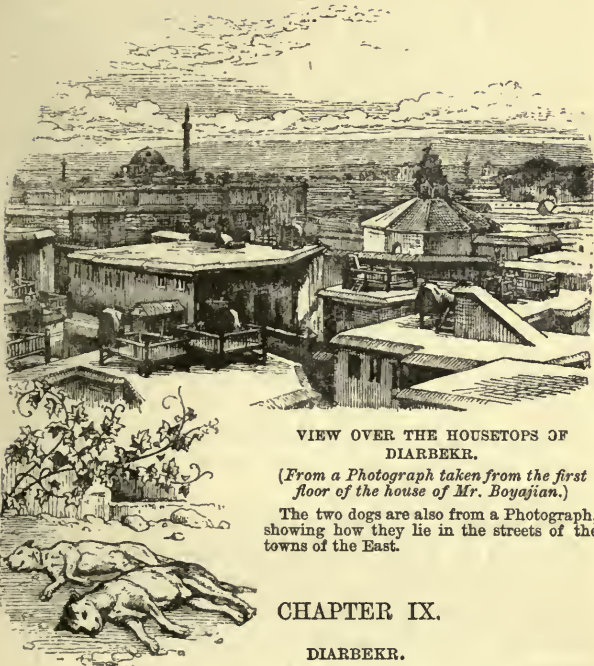
and the manufacture is strong and durable, as well as gay.

We bade farewell to our host, and rode off under the guidance of his son, who acted as our zaptieh. We soon came to the edge of the hill, and found that the range up whose long sloping back we had ascended for hours, dipped suddenly on the other side, and formed the boundary of a plain which extended further than we could see. It is true there was a haze over all the plain, and the range of our vision was perhaps not in reality very extensive, but the scene enabled us perhaps to realise better than a clearer view would have done the idea of looking from the hill-top over the boundless Mesopotamian plain. The descent was steep and rocky and dangerous; but we got down without misadventure, pursued the course of a mountain stream for some hours, and found our caravan, which had travelled on while we stopped to lunch, ready camped. Fortunate they who had made a good luncheon at the Koord tents, which I had not done, for Philippus had got nothing for dinner for us but egg, rice-pudding, and a cup of coffee.

Our zaptieh gave us here an illustration of the practical value of his protection if we should be attacked by a party of marauding Koords. A large hawk or small eagle, I do not know which, was perched on a telegraph pole close by, and the zaptieh laid hold of his gun and undertook to show his skill as a marksman upon the devoted bird. He took long and careful aim, pulled the trigger, and the piece missed fire. He reprimed the gun, the hawk looking on with interest at the manœuvre, took deliberate aim again, fired, and missed. The hawk, tired of waiting any longer to be killed, spread his broad wings and sailed away, and the zaptieh looked disgusted.

Friday, June 9.—Having an easy stage before us, and being very tired, we did not rise till 3 A.M., and got under way by 4.30. Crossed an irregular plain, dipped into a

wide shallow valley, crossed it and the stream in the middle of it, ascended to the level of the plain again, and came in sight of the city of Diarbekr. The aspect of the city as approached from this side is very imposing, and realises better than any place I have seen the ideal of a great ancient city. The dark walls are lofty and entire, with great round towers at intervals; they rise sheer out of the extensive plain without any suburbs. Behind the walls are seen towers, domes, and minarets; the size of the town is considerable, and at this distance all looks perfect. A mountain chain, with fine outlines and patches of snow on the summits, bounds the whole view to the north. It looks worthy of its history, for this is the famous city of Amida, so often taken and retaken by the Roman and Persian arms.



VIEW OVER THE HOUSETOPS OF
DIARBEKR.

*(From a Photograph taken from the first
floor of the house of Mr. Boyajian.)*

The two dogs are also from a Photograph,
showing how they lie in the streets of the
towns of the East.

CHAPTER IX.

DIARBEKR.

I HAD a letter of introduction from the consul at Aleppo to Mr. Boyajian ; and we sought to communicate with him in the first instance in order to take his advice whether we had better seek lodgings in the city, or camp outside it, and if so, where ? But we could not ascertain from the people about the gate where to find Mr. Boyajian ; it turned out afterwards that we ought to have inquired for him under the name of Baron Thômas, and anybody could have directed us to him. We accordingly looked out

for the most eligible place we could find for camping, and at last pitched our tents on the outside of the city moat, between the north gate and the west gate. In the afternoon I dressed and ordered the horses, to go and pay a visit and present my letter of introduction to Mr. Boyajian, whose identity had meantime been established and his residence discovered by the interpreter; but by that time I felt so ill and incapable of exertion, that I sent the interpreter with my apologies and the letter, and begged Mr. Boyajian, if he knew anything of medicine, to be kind enough to pay a visit to me. In a short time he kindly came, a gentleman-like man in modern Turkish dress, riding a handsome grey ass, with a servant on horseback behind him. He protested against the position of our camp beside the almost stagnant water in the city moat, and hospitably pressed us to take up our quarters at his house. I thankfully accepted his kindness; he put me at once on his servant's horse and carried me off, leaving W. to see to the packing of our necessities and to bring them after us on one of our horses under the conduct of his servant.

We were very fortunate. Our host's house, which had been built or improved by a former consul, was perhaps the best in Diarbekr. The divan, resembling that of Madame Cleopas at Aleppo, had a tank in the middle with a constant flow of water through it, and looked out into a garden, and was the coolest place in the city. Mr. Boyajian spoke English well—his wife was an Englishwoman—and he had already as guests in his house two other English ladies, the wife of an Englishman, who had recently settled as a merchant in the city, and her sister, and we were entertained and nursed with the utmost hospitality and kindness.

The town is situated on the summit of the lofty rocky bank of the Tigris, which with a circular sweep encloses the eastern side of the city. It is defended by a wall built

of black basalt, with four gates commanded by gate towers, and further strengthened by square and round wall towers. On the river side the wall is not so lofty; on the land side it is further strengthened by a second low wall and a ditch beyond. Internally there is a broad space left clear all round the walls for military operations. The walls as they stand were possibly in great part rebuilt or repaired in mediæval times out of old material, for fragments of columns are plentifully built into them. This great and strong place played an important part in the wars between the Roman and Persian empires. It was enlarged and strengthened and garrisoned with seven legions by the Emperor Constantius, in view of the war threatened against him by Sapor, the King of Persia. One of the Roman officers of the garrison was Ammianus Marcellinus, the historian, who gives a minute account of the siege. Sapor had been advised not to waste time in sieges, but to march straight through Mesopotamia and Syria and seize at once upon Antioch. But in passing under the walls of Amida (A.D. 360) the great king resolved to try whether the terror of his arms would not awe the garrison into a surrender. The reply to his summons was a dart hurled from the wall, which glanced against the royal tiara, and the indignant king listened impatiently to his ministers, who conjured him not to risk the success of the enterprise in the endeavour to avenge the insult. The next day Grumbates, king of the allied nation of the Chionites, advanced towards the gates with a select body of troops and again demanded the instant surrender of the city. The reply was a general discharge of missiles from the walls, and his only son, a beautiful and valiant youth, fell by his side pierced by a dart from one of the ballistæ. This strengthened the resentment of Sapor, who solemnly swore that Amida should serve as a funeral pile to expiate the death and perpetuate the memory of the slain youth. The city was surrounded and a general

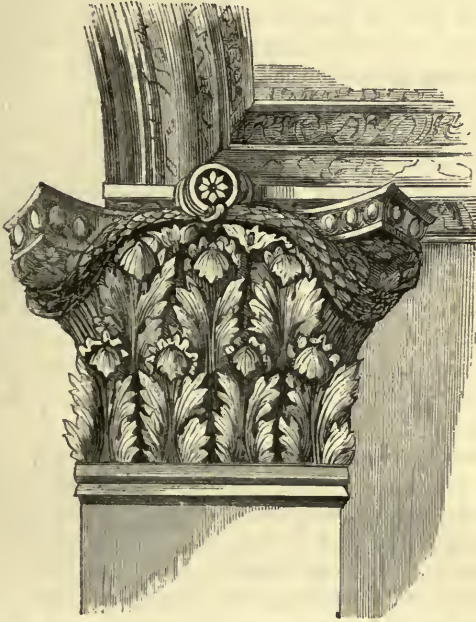
assault delivered again and again, but always driven back with dreadful slaughter. A nocturnal sortie of the garrison hewed its way into the heart of the Persian camp. On the other side a small party of the royal guard were introduced by a deserter up the rocky bank of the Tigris, and through a neglected postern into the upper story of one of the wall towers, where they planted the Persian banner ; but they were all cut to pieces and the postern closed and defended before their comrades could effect an entrance. Sapor was reduced to a regular siege, in which he was assisted by Roman deserters. The city was defended with all the skill of the military art of the times. But the resources of the besiegers were at length exhausted ; a practicable breach was made ; some of the troops and townspeople escaped from the town ; the rest were involved in a promiscuous massacre. The siege had lasted seventy-three days ; Sapor had lost 30,000 of his troops. The ruin of Amida was the safety of the Roman provinces, for at its conclusion Sapor returned without attempting anything further.

In the peace which the Emperor Jovian, after the death of Julian, made with Sapor, Amida was surrendered to the Persian monarch. It was recovered again by the Romans.

In the reign of Anastatius, the King Cabades again besieged it (A.D. 503). Again the city for three months withstood its assailants, who lost 50,000 men before its walls. At length an unguarded tower was scaled in the night ; the besiegers entered by it at dawn, and 80,000 of the inhabitants were slain in the massacre which ensued. At the termination of the war, however, it again reverted to the possession of the Romans.

The city possesses many interesting remains of past times. A lofty wall which encloses one of the principal mosques has two rows of porphyry pillars, one over the other, apparently of Roman workmanship, and is said to

have been originally part of a temple.* The Church of SS. Cosmas and Damian, occupied by the Jacobites, retains its original apse. The capitals of the pilasters which support the triumphal arch are of classical design, of large size and fine workmanship. The moulding round the



CAPITAL OF PILASTER SUPPORTING THE "TRIUMPHAL ARCH" OF
THE CHURCH OF SS. COSMAS AND DAMIAN, DIARBEKR.

arch, which is continued as a cornice along the east wall of the nave, is also of great depth, fine design, and rich effect. The tombs of the canonised physician-saints are shown in the church. There is a small hole in the

* There is a fine drawing of it in Hommaire de Hell's *Voyage en Turquie*, Plate XLII.

front of the tomb and a metal pin hangs beside it. The devotee may thus touch the relics of the saints with the metal, and then apply it to his own person, and thus (so they say) cures of diseases are occasionally effected. We paid a visit to the priests of this church, who received us in a pleasant corner, sheltered from the sun by the wall of their house, with a tank of water in front and a few shady trees, gave us coffee and pipes, and chatted with us for half an hour. The Church of St. James (probably St. James of Nisibis), occupied by the Greek Church, is said traditionally to have originally extended westward as far as the city wall. This would be a very disproportionate length for the church, even if a great courtyard at its west end, as in many other basilican churches, were included, but the tradition may be taken as an indication that the church was of great length. The portion which remains is the apse and the eastern wall of the church. Here again the capitals of the triumphal arch are of the same grandeur and the same semi-classical style, and probably the same date as in SS. Cosmas and Damian.

These churches deserve complete description and illustration by drawings. I engaged a Bulgarian refugee residing in the place to make me drawings of the cornices, but I subsequently heard that he had left without executing my commission, and I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Boyajian for the drawing from which the accompanying woodcut is taken. Some of the mosques and minarets are fine buildings, but the Diarbekr mob is esteemed the most fanatical in the whole region, and I felt bound to listen to the dissuasions of my friend against trying to visit them.

Diarbekr, like Urfa, has within the walls a reservoir supplied by copious springs, and tenanted by sacred fish. These sacred fish are supposed to be a superstitious relic of the ancient worship of a fish-god which existed in

Mesopotamia, as well as among the Egyptians and Philistines.

The house in which we were residing was perhaps the loftiest in the town, and from the windows of our bedroom in the upper story we could see a wide sweep of the walls and towers, the ruined citadel, the mosques and minarets, and, lastly, we overlooked the housetops of that quarter of the town. These housetops presented a curious picture of Eastern life. Upon every one of them was a great wooden bedstead, with posts at the four angles, and horizontal laths to carry curtains. About sunset the women might be seen busy unrolling the bundles of bedding and arranging them, then spreading the white curtains of the bedstead, till every housetop possessed its square tent, within which the whole family passed the night. By sunrise in the morning the curtains were removed, the bedding rolled up into great bundles, and the city assumed its usual aspect.

The heat here was very great. At eight o'clock in the morning in the shade in Mr. Boyajian's divan, the coolest place in the city, the thermometer was at 88 and 89. In the sun in the middle of the day I do not know how high it rose, perhaps as high as 120.

Mr. Boyajian accompanied me to pay my respects to the Pasha of Diarbekr, who is the chief official of the whole vilayet. The visit had its points of interest. The Serai is about half a mile outside the north gate. We walked to the gate, and there waited a few minutes for a vehicle which plies between the town and the Serai for the benefit of the officials and others who may have business there. The vehicle was a rough cart without springs, with poles at the corners supporting a rude curtain to screen the travellers from the sun, the said travellers sitting on a very uncomfortable wooden seat slung from the sides of the vehicle. As we approached we saw the white tents of the troops encamped in front of the Serai. Arrived at the Serai, a

servant at the foot of the stairs carefully wiped the dust off our bright leather boots, and thus excused us from the unpleasant ceremony of taking them off at the door of the pasha's room. On the top of the stairs we passed through an ante-room occupied by a sentry and servants, and entered the audience chamber. The pasha sat in an arm-chair in the further corner of the room—a man past the middle age, dressed in the modern Turkish costume, *i.e.*, in clothes of European fashion, with a fez; a pleasant, gentleman-like, courteous person, who said a few kind words to me, and then went off into a conversation with my companion, with whom he is on very friendly terms. Very soon after we had taken our places a servant handed round glasses of sherbet, which is nothing more than iced water poured upon some vegetable syrup, very pleasant in this climate. Another servant brought us cigarettes, ready lighted. After a short interval coffee was served in the usual fashion.

A secretary entered the room with a bundle of papers. The pasha courteously apologised for turning from us to attend to him on the ground that it was public business. I was glad of the incident. The pasha took a small bag from his pocket and took a seal from it, which he handed to the secretary. The secretary, with his little finger, charged with the thick black ink which they use in the East, smeared the seal and rubbed off the superfluous ink on the ball of his thumb. Meantime the pasha had glanced over the first paper, handed it to the secretary, who affixed the seal, and so with the rest. Then came another class of papers. The pasha took out his purse, extracted from it a smaller seal, which the secretary inked as before, and, as the pasha glanced through the remaining papers and handed them to him, sealed them also. Then he carefully wiped the seals and returned them to the pasha, who as carefully replaced the one in its bag and the other in its purse; and the secretary salaamed and retired. The

pasha did not sign his name; the seal thus carefully retained in his own possession was the authentication of the document. So it used to be in England; and everybody who has ever had occasion to sign a legal document will remember how the legal tenacity of ancient precedent still puts a red wafer to represent the seal, though with us the autograph has come to be the essential part of the authentication. In the East the secretary writes the name, and the seal is the important thing; in Europe the lawyer affixes the seal, and the name is the important thing. While all this was going on, a servant had brought in other lighted cigarettes. An intelligent-looking ecclesiastic came in to pay his respects, and I was informed that he was the Chaldean Archbishop of Diarbekr, while he was informed who I was and what was my errand. He said, in French, that I was intruding into his province; I begged, with every respect to his Grace, and deprecating any argument on the subject, to be allowed to hold that I was on a legitimate mission to the true representatives of the ancient Church of the East. The Archbishop took his leave; and after a few more kindly phrases from the pasha, who promised us a zaptieh to guide and guard us on our further journey, we also shook hands and left.

I add some statistics and some notes on the religious condition of Diarbekr.

The population of the city is 25,000 persons. More than half is Christians of various denominations, mostly of the poorer classes, though they have some merchants, &c., among them. The Mussulman population is fanatical and oppressive. The Christian population is divided as follows, the number being reckoned in families:—

Old Armenians, 1,500; with two churches, three schools, a bishop and twelve priests. Papal Armenians, 200. These are divided into two equal bodies, one retaining its old ecclesiastical liturgy and customs, the other conforming to those of Rome. They have one school and five priests.

Jacobites (Monophysite Assyrians), 250 to 300 families, many of them very poor and ignorant, with one miserable school and three priests.

Papal Syrians, 80 ; with one church, one school, and one priest.

Orthodox Greek, 50 ; with one church, one school, an archbishop, and two priests.

Papal Greek, 5 ; with one priest.

Chaldeans (*i.e.*, Papal Nestorians), 200 ; with one church, one school, an archbishop, and four priests. There are no Nestorians living in Diarbekr, but there is a colony of them at Jiza, a distance of seven or eight days' journey, and some of them come into Diarbekr in winter in search of work.

Armenian Protestant, 900 ; Syrian Protestant, 100 ; with one church, three schools (two boys' and one girls', containing 130 children), one minister, one assistant minister.

Jews, 50.

There is also here an Armenian clergyman (Mr. Garabet), ordained by Bishop Gobat, who has a congregation of about ten persons, who worship in a room in his house, and profess to be of the Church of England.

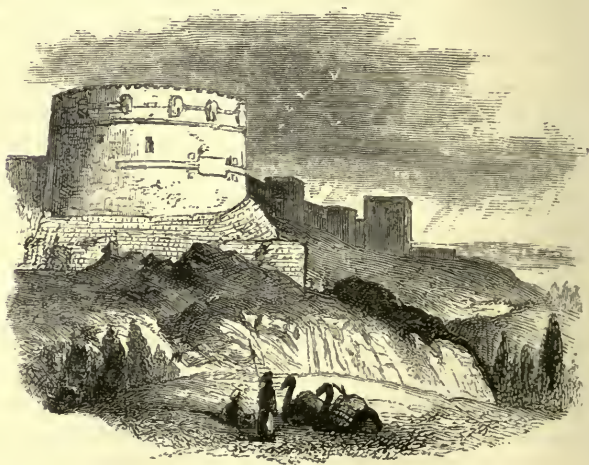
The position of the joint body of Armenian and Syrian Protestants here is remarkable, and is an illustration of a wide-spread condition of religious feeling. The Protestant body was originally gathered together by the American missionaries ; Mr. Boyajian, an Armenian gentleman of considerable intelligence and good education, was its minister. After a while he and his congregation became dissatisfied with the form of the church the American missionaries organised. With the help of English and American Christians, they subscribed money and erected a new church for themselves. Many of them were anxious to introduce the English Prayer-book and connect themselves with the Church of England ; others, however, were not prepared for this step, and it was not eventually taken.

Many of the congregation feel the irregularity of their ecclesiastical status. They would gladly be members of a reformed Armenian Church ; but they feel that to go back to the Armenian Church as it is would be in some respects a backward step in their religious life, while, probably, the Church would not receive them back without concessions to which they could not submit. On the other hand, they repudiate much of the teaching and discipline of the modern American missionaries. This body of Protestants looks with strong sympathy to the Church of England.

Here we had to come to a decision as to our future route. We had already recognised the wisdom of the caution given us at Aleppo ; a week's indisposition here had emphasised all that we were told of the trying character of the climate in these plains at this time of year, and it hardly needed the advice of the German army doctor we had called in professionally, and of the friends we made here, to confirm us in the resolution not to attempt the journey to Mosul. But we had hoped to make an excursion as far as Mardin, the residence of the Jacobite Patriarch and Metropolis of the Assyrian Monophysites. We had indeed special business with him ; he had visited England a year before, asking help to educate his people, and we were specially commissioned to visit him, and gather information which might guide those at home who had been interested in the visit of the representative of this grand line of patriarchs of Antioch. We learnt, however, that the Jacobite Patriarch had not returned from India, whither he had gone from England on the affairs of the Christians of St. Thomas ; and we gathered that though it was a pity to miss seeing Mardin and its neighbouring monastery, and the view from its steep height over the Mesopotamian plain, yet the special object of our expedition would lose nothing. We had seen the representatives of the body at Urfa, and here at Diarbekr, and we should come across specimens of their villages on our future

journey, and we should add nothing to our knowledge of them by visiting Mardin; while, on the other hand, the excursion would occupy a week, and that journey would carry us further south. We accordingly abandoned the intention to visit Mardin, and resolved at once to take the road through Seert and Wan to Kochanes.

We learnt that in addition to the forty families of Jacobites at Aleppo, 304 families at Urfa, and 250 to 300 families at Diarbekr, there were 500 families at Mardin, and others in scattered villages, whose numbers are not certainly known, but we were told that the whole body probably did not exceed 70,000 persons.



WALL-TOWER, DIARBEKR.

CHAPTER X.

DIARBEKR TO BITLIS.

Tuesday, June 13.—We left Diarbekr late in the evening in order to make a fair start early next morning. Rode down the river bank and forded the Tigris, and paused on the other bank to take in the view of the town from this side. The Tigris here sweeps round towards the west, its bank rises steep and rocky, and on the summit of the rock the walls of the city are founded. The serai, which was a kind of citadel, is on this side, and adds to the apparent strength and picturesqueness of the view. As we ascended the opposite hills and got a view over the whole town, it put on a very curious appearance. We have already described the curtained beds on the housetops which are in general use. By this late hour of the evening they were all prepared; and the whole town looked as if it had erected an upper story of white walls. Two hours' ride up the hills brought us to the village of Salikkoi, where we camped for the night outside the village, with a distant view through a cleft of the hills of the black walls of Diarbekr and its white-curtained beds.

Wednesday, June 14.—We rose early, and had a long day's journey through low hills and across fertile plains; there were great fields of fine wheat and frequent villages. We stopped for our noon meal and rest beside a rivulet, where there was a tomb, and a group of fine mulberry-trees as an appendage to the tomb, the fruit being free to all comers. Another party of travellers also came up and rested under the trees. The chief came and introduced himself to us. He was a Turk of Stamboul, and was travelling from place

to place collecting the salt dues. He had a servant and two or three attendants ostentatiously armed. Resumed our journey in company with our Turkish acquaintance. Camped for the night at a village called Bismilkoi, our friend taking up his quarters in one of the houses in the village. He entertained us while waiting for dinner with a collation, in a garden, of bread and native cheese, fruit, cucumber, and a liqueur which we tasted for the first time—rose raki, *i.e.*, arrak flavoured with rose leaves. We in return gave him dinner, and treated him to the last of half a dozen bottles of English beer our cook had picked up in Diarbekr.

Thursday, June 15.—Another long day, in which we descended into the broad valley through which the Bothman river flows. This river is the ancient Nymphæus, and in the time of Procopius was the boundary between the Roman and Persian empires.* We skirted it for some distance, and at length had to cross to the other side. It was a weird-looking ford. It was not only that the river was broad, and the stream ran rapidly, but that the water was turbid and red like a thick mixture of brick-dust and water. A dervish was waiting on the hither side to guide travellers across, just as in old times in England a hermit often established his cell by a dangerous ford, in order to benefit his fellow-men by acting as host and guide. The dervish stripped off his clothes, and took my bridle rein, and the rest followed. I confess I was glad of his help. Only those who have forded a broad, deep, rapid river know how trying it is to the nerves. If you look, as you naturally do, at your horse's head you lose sight of the banks, the water swirls past under your eyes and makes you giddy, you lose the direction, the horse splashes heavily forward, stumbling among the stones at the bottom, and threatening to pitch you over his head; and when horse

* Mr. Taylor, "Royal Geographical Society's Journal," Vol. xxxv., p. 30.

and man are tired with a long day's journey, and the man is depressed with low fever besides, it is a comfort to have a friendly dervish at your bridle rein. A short ride through marshy country brought us to the village of Geraseir beside a lofty tumulus, at whose base we pitched our camp. I did not like the situation. The marshy district round must necessarily breed malaria. I went half-way up the tumulus, and lay there till late in the night, and then took shelter in the tent, resolved to rise and march on as soon as it was light.

In the middle of the night there was an alarm—guns firing, men shouting, dogs barking, then a straggling line of men hurrying from the village. What is it? A shepherd had run in to report that the Koords had made a dash and carried off the flocks of the village from their pasturage. W. was naturally anxious to shoulder his rifle and go off to see the scrimmage; but when it was pointed out that since he could not speak a word of the language he might find himself in considerable perplexity on such an expedition, and that, besides, it was not the business of a deputation from the Archbishop of Canterbury to go a-shooting Koords, or getting himself shot by them, in a night skirmish, he followed the wiser course of turning over to the other side and going to sleep again. He lost nothing by it, for in the morning we learnt that it was all a false alarm; the shepherd had fallen asleep and his flock had wandered, and when he awoke and missed them, he jumped hastily to the conclusion that the Koords had carried them off. But I noted the fact that everybody seemed to think it quite a probable occurrence; I called to mind that when the zaptieh had to ride over on the previous evening to the neighbouring village to report himself to the authority there, he borrowed our rifle for his protection on the road; and I came to the conclusion that on crossing the Red River we had entered a disturbed country haunted by the Koord freebooters.

Friday, June 16.—Rose before day, and got off as soon as possible out of the malaria district. Soon got out of the Bothman valley, and began to approach the hills; they lay before us in a long line, with a crest of bare rock which



A KOORD.

The cloak thrown over his dress is of very light texture, like muslin.

looked like a Cyclopean fortification, with a deep gap where the road ran across. At the foot of the hills, but some distance off our road, was a little Jacobite monastery, shaded by trees; the corn land for a long way round belonged to the fathers.

At last we began to ascend the hills in good earnest, and the effect was immediately perceptible; the pure air and the fresh breeze dispelled the feverish languor and depression, and braced the nerves and made us new creatures. Arrived at the summit we looked down upon a remarkable landscape. We were on the summit of the range of hills which formed one side of a mountain valley; a considerable stream ran winding through the valley. The hills on both sides of the valley were of remarkable shapes. Ranges of hills, range above range receding from the valley, looking like hills of soil which had been ravined and rounded and moulded into fantastic shapes by centuries of rainy seasons; with not a tree or shrub to break their forms, and the grass upon them withered by the sun into the colour of the brown hills. It looked like a world in which the hills had been formed, but the vegetation had not yet been created. We took a slanting course down the hither side of the valley. One piece of the road was memorable. A lofty hill rose sheer out of the river to a considerable height, and our road zig-zagged up the steep sloping side. The track in the friable soil was narrow—perhaps two feet wide—and the constant falling of the soil from below the path tended to eat it away, and the falling of the soil from above to block it up. At one steep place, which almost overhung the river roaring among its rocks below, a little landslip had fairly carried away a piece of the path, leaving it half its normal width. As we approached it the question which came into one's mind was, whether the weight of horse and rider would cause a further landslip. If it did, the next few moments would see horse and rider among the rocks in the river below! There was no help for it; it was not possible to turn on the path and retrace our steps; so without a word or pause we paced quietly on, and happily without an accident.

We camped for the night at a little Jacobite village called Ayn Karam (Fountain of Mercy) from a clear and copious

spring which rises on the hill-top. We had a long conversation with the village priest. He told us something of the grievances the people suffer. His complaint was chiefly of the mode in which they are oppressed by the tax-gatherers. It is not of the amount of the lawful taxes they complain so much as of the way in which the collectors demand and take almost what they like; they quarter themselves on the people without payment; they give irregular receipts, which the collector of next year refuses to recognise; they behave altogether like the foragers of an invading army rather than the collectors of the lawful taxes of a civilised government. If the publicans in old times conducted themselves in like manner, no wonder they were abhorred.

The priest showed us the village church—certainly the humblest house of God I have ever seen. It is a low building, six or eight yards long, built of mud, with a flat roof. Internally, the sanctuary is divided from the nave by a solid wall with a door through. The roof is supported by four poles, each set in a mass of clay by way of base; the roof is composed of rough sticks, over which are laid boughs with the dried leaves on them, and over them a thick layer of earth. The altar is large in proportion to the space, and is made with two ledges at the back like a super-altar, the whole structure being of earth and plaster. There is a step in front on which the priest stands. One small loop over the altar and the open door admit light and air into the building. Here the priest says his office regularly every night and morning, and here the handful of villagers assemble every Sunday to offer their worship to God.

Saturday, June 17.—Descended the hill, forded the river, and ascended the opposite hills. Found ourselves then on an extensive undulating table-land, with a loftier range of mountains round the north and east sides of the horizon. The foot-hills of these mountains are curiously ravined and seamed and wrinkled, and look like the gnarled roots

of the mountains ; they are formed, I suppose, by the débris, which has fallen from them, and been modelled into these fantastic shapes by the winter rains ; above, the mountains are all rugged and bare, with steep precipices, and fine outlines, and streaks of snow. We passed the town of Redwan on our right, and stopped to lunch at the village of Seerta or Badrichan. Here is a larger house than usual, built on a mound ; the village, of about forty houses, clusters round the base of the mound, a small stream runs by. In the afternoon we only made another hour and a half, and camped for the night beside a spring. The plain we have been crossing was formerly peopled by the Yezidees, a tribe with a religion whose tenets are unknown to their neighbours, and we therefore hesitate to believe in the devil-worship of which they are accused. Some years ago they were disquieted by the Turks and migrated, but a few of them are said still to linger here.

June 18.—Started early (4.30), and rode forward ahead of the caravan, feeling much better in health, the sweet morning mountain air seeming to reinvigorate one at every breath. The scenery was picturesque, among hills with patches of brushwood ; round the sloping side of a hill by a narrow path overhanging the valley ; down one deep rocky hill-side, across the tiny torrent at the bottom, and up the opposite rocky hill-side. Then we descend a steep smooth slope into a marshy valley with a larger stream meandering through it. Ascend the opposite side, and are again among mountains on all sides—nothing but mountains—rising on the left into snowy peaks. In winter it must be awfully bleak and dreary. We crossed the Bitlis water a little before it joins the eastern branch of the Tigris. Here is a lofty bridge, which must be invaluable when the river is filled by the rains, but we crossed by the ford a little lower down. On the top of the opposite hills we found a fertile and cultivated little plain, with fruit-trees dotting the hill-sides, and at the extremity of

the plain came to the town of Seert. It is a small, good-looking town of stone, built on the slope of the hill, with a couple of mosques and minarets, and a large serai at the upper part of the town, and the bazaars at its lower part. The houses are many of them of old stones, the ruins of an ancient town on the same site. The minaret of one of the mosques is a short thick pillar of red and green vitrified brick, with remains of a band of ornamental work in blue (?) brick; it inclines to one side, like the Tower of Pisa. We camped outside the town, where a covered fountain and a magnificent old tree, beside a tomb, gave us shade and water.

Mattran Petrus, a Chaldean metropolitan, lives at a monastery a little way out of the town, but was absent at the time of our visit.

The new zaptieh whom we took here told us there were two roads to Bitlis—one by the valley, the other over the mountains, and advised us to take the latter, as we should find cooler air and more frequent springs; we thought it probable that we should also have finer scenery, therefore we adopted his suggestion.

The result answered our expectations. We soon left the plain of Seert behind, and found ourselves again in the midst of mountain scenery, winding through defiles, plunging down steep descents, climbing others still steeper and higher; the hills mostly with rounded outlines and dotted with bushes of oak and acacia, but hills on a large, bold scale; while every now and then from a hill-top we had a panoramic view of these nearer hills and defiles, with the wilder, grander forms of the distant mountains streaked with snow for a background. About noon we came to a mountain village, of which we were told that its name is Kufra, and that it is an ancient and famous site, but it seems to be unmarked on all the maps. We saw first a bold, rocky height crowned by a group of stone buildings which looked like a fortress, and turned out to

be the house of the bey, and an ancient church turned into a mosque. Our road wound by a steep, rocky path round the side of this height, and brought us at last to a kind of village green, shadowed by a fine spreading mulberry-tree a little below the village acropolis. Here we pitched our tents for the rest of the day, for the rough mountain path had been very trying for the horses. It was a little oasis among the barren mountains. The village is built of stone, with seventy or eighty houses (fifteen Jacobite families, two or three Armenian, and the rest Mussulman), a mosque, a bath, two Mussulman schools, three mollahs, a church at a little distance from the village, a Christian school, and a priest; and is surrounded by luxuriant gardens, orchards, vineyards, fields, growing figs, pomegranates, grapes, mulberries, rice; of course a plentiful spring and careful irrigation were the sources of this fertility. The view over the country was extensive and picturesque, and would have been much more picturesque but for the absence of trees.

The school-room was said to be an ancient building as well as the mosque, but we could not get permission to visit them. We paid a visit to the priest. In the evening the priest returned our visit at supper time, and we made him sup with us. The chief man of the village and others of the people also paid us a visit, squatted in a half-circle round the tent door, and chatted and smoked. They complained of oppression, but it seemed to me that what they complained of was the high-handed dealing of their own feudal chiefs, and that all the fault to be attributed to the central government was that it did not, and probably could not, protect them.

Tuesday, June 20.—We were up and out early enough to see the first sunlight fall upon the peaks of the opposite mountains. The mountain air was delicious, it was like inhaling some exhilarating fluid, which gave vigour and delight in every draught. We started at five. Our

journey through the day was through still finer scenery. We were approaching the higher mountain region; the mountains were more abrupt and rocky; the ravines narrower and deeper; and above all there was a sufficiency of trees to give us the contrast of waving forest with the rigid outlines of the hills, of green foliage with grey cliff and boulder. The journeying was a climbing up and down steep stairs of rock. I feel that it is impossible to make the reader comprehend the nature of the ground. In many places it was literally a cyclopean stair of huge, irregular rocks—the ascent was laborious, but the descent was startling; but seeing that the pack horses, with heavy loads on their backs, could do it safely, we assumed that the saddle horses with men on their backs, could do it equally well. It was only here and there we dismounted, *e.g.*, where the horse had to climb up some crevice between rocks whose projecting corners seemed to leave no space for our legs to pass; or where he had to descend a similar place, putting one foot into one deep hole and another into another, and where a clumsy step would break the horse's leg and his rider's neck.

Wild as the country is, our guide told us that there were numerous villages in the mountain valleys—one containing about 1,000 houses, with extensive vineyards, sending great quantities of raisins to market. Gold mines used to be worked among these mountains in old times, and some English adventurers had offered to work the mountains again.

Still up and down, sometimes zig-zagging sharply up the rocky heights nearly as high as the snow-line, then plunging down again into the ravines, crossing the brawling torrents at the bottom, to climb up again on the other side. At 10 A.M. we halted in a little valley through which a larger brook flowed briskly among the rocks under the shade of trees; ate, bathed, slept, and enjoyed it much. Resumed our road at 3.30, still among fine

wooded hills. We were warned that we might possibly come across a wolf or a bear. It began to grow dark before we had reached the place where our guide had intended to stay for the night, and the road was not one which could be travelled in the dark. Fortunately a Nestorian who had joined our caravan could tell us of a place near at hand where some Koord tents were pitched, and where, consequently, we should be sure of water, could most likely buy milk, and could get the protection of guards.

In another quarter of an hour we reached the place, too dark to see anything more than that we were on an open space near the edge of a steep descent, with a deep valley at our feet, and the opposite hills dimly defined among the stars; the rush of a waterfall was somewhere close behind us among the trees. The Koords good-naturedly came to our assistance, brought a pile of fuel and lighted a bonfire, by whose light we were able to pitch our tent; then we bought native bread and butter and milk, and supped; then we held a divan of our wild companions round the tent door by firelight, and finally took ourselves to our mattresses, and slept soundly till dawn.

Were not we in dangerous quarters? Well, we learnt that there were near a thousand of these Koords scattered about the valley into which we looked; and that the settled inhabitants of the country had complained of their depredations, and that the pasha had ordered them to leave. If they had come upon our tent in the evening they would probably not have scrupled to take anything they could lay hands upon, the horses especially, and they might even have attempted to coerce and rob us of everything we possessed. But coming to them as we did, and throwing ourselves upon them, I had no fear of the families of the two or three tents among whom we were camped, and we hired a couple of their young men as guards over our tent and properties during the night against others.

Wednesday, June 21.—Next morning, having been told that it was only a short ride into Bitlis, we did not start till about six, and contented ourselves with a very slight breakfast. In truth we had not the materials for anything more substantial. We had exhausted our stores; the Koords had no eggs, we had not yet learnt to eat yohoort—the *pièce de resistance* of a mountain meal—so that there was nothing left but milk and native bread and butter, and a cup of Turkish coffee.

Regaining the road we had left last night, a few paces brought us to a break in the trees, through which we looked right down into the valley, and along the whole length of a reach of it. It was a charming prospect. The hills rose steeply out of the valley, throwing out spurs into it here and there; the whole bed of the valley was green with growing rice, the margin fringed with old walnut trees; the village we ought to have reached last night was a little way up the valley; the rising sun threw slanting lights and shadows across the scene. It was fortunate we did not attempt to push on to the village last night in the dark. We had to scramble down a rocky path, with boughs of trees stretching across here and there, which would have swept us out of the saddle; moreover, pretty as the valley looked, it was far better to sleep in the mountain air than among the rice-fields. Our way now wound along the valley until noon. Then we halted for an hour and lunched off our last tin of sardines and a bit of native bread. Our guide grumbled at the halt, because we should so soon reach Bitlis; so we let the caravan and servant precede us, with orders to pitch the tent and cook the dinner in readiness for us. When we resumed our journey we presently found ourselves involved in a picturesque rocky pass, where two horses could only here and there pass one another. We had experimental proof of it, for we met a caravan coming up the pass, whose katurjis were not very much disposed to put themselves out for us, but our

zaptieh scrambled ahead and rated them soundly, and drove their beasts aside for us to pass. Half-way down the pass we stopped to drink at a copious spring which flowed out of the hill-side from between two strata of rock in a broad, thin sheet of water. This pass led us down into the valley through which the Bitlis river runs, with a full stream and strong current. As we rode up the valley we noticed on the left a remarkable geological formation. It looked as if the Titans had laid a roof of large irregular slabs of limestone over a great group of older rocks. We made out that a calcareous spring had slowly flowed over the rocks and gradually left a precipitate of stone; and then an earthquake must have broken the covering into slabs. A little further on the right, on the other bank of the river, we saw a large building with a church, which we (rightly) conjectured to be the Armenian monastery—one of the chief establishments of Bitlis. We could see the groves and houses of the town, and began already to look out for the tent, which was to be pitched outside. But we had still a long ride before us.

CHAPTER XI.

BITLIS.

BITLIS is most picturesquely situated. The river along whose sides we had been riding for some time past descends into the head of the valley down the bed of a steep winding rocky gorge. The town is built on the steep sides of this gorge. The hills rise in irregular terraces, and these terraces have afforded sites for the houses.

As we approach the town the road crosses the ravine by a bridge carried on a bold pointed arch, from the middle of which there is a very picturesque view up the gorge. Having reached the other side of the bridge the road turns to the left at a right angle, and runs along a terrace of rock, paved with irregular flat stones in fair order, under the wall of the town. A little way on, the road again crosses the ravine to a similar natural terrace, with a similar pavement on the other bank. Further up is a mosque with some architectural pretensions. Half-way up is the shell of an extensive Saracenic castle. A little further we ride through the narrow lanes of the bazaar; and still on and up, winding with the ravine, crossing from side to side, on bold single-arched bridges, as the formation of the ground requires. It is a fine town, with its paved streets and houses of stone, far the best we have seen in the East; built entirely on the steep sides of the ravine, it follows its windings for an hour's ride, from the valley right up to the head of the gorge. I shall not soon forget the ride through it. I had hoped that we should find our camp pitched in the valley before we entered the town, and at every turn we

looked out anxiously for it. Travelling all day under the hot sun, with insufficient food and a touch of fever, had brought me into a strange dreamy state, and the whole thing began to seem like a nightmare, in which one was condemned to wander on through a wonderful town, winding this way and that way, always up and up, along paved terraces on the brink of a ravine, across unparapeted bridges, with the stream always roaring and foaming below; winding this way and that way, still up and up, with bridge after bridge and terrace after terrace, for ever. It came to an end at last; right through and above the town, on a platform of the mountain some 5,000 feet above the sea, we caught sight of the white roof of the tent. I pushed through a gap, rode across the field, dismounted and lay down on the ground, and began to shiver violently.

Thursday, June 22.—We two Englishmen and the Nestorian deacon were all ill, so we sent for the doctor, a middle-aged German army doctor, who made light of our ailments, and promised to put us into travelling condition again in two or three days. We were really detained until the following Monday, and they were four very unpleasant days we spent here. In good health and spirits one laughs at the discomforts of tent life, but when ill and depressed they are not a laughing matter. Notwithstanding the height of our camp, the heat during the day was very great and trying; when we opened the tent walls to let the breeze blow through, it brought with it a fine dust, which settled upon everything—the bedding and the food, filled our hair, and covered our faces and hands. In the evening the wind blew cold from the snow mountains on the other side of the Bitlis valley. The kaimakam sent us three zaptiehs to take care of us and our belongings, but they did not prevent the boys of the town, and sometimes a few men among them, from crowding in front of the tent door, and prowling all about, to study, with praiseworthy

but troublesome curiosity, the natural history of the English species of the genus homo. We were also interviewed by several deputations and individuals. I was anxious to examine the castle and some other buildings which had passed across my retina, and dwelt on my memory, in that fantastic nightmare ride up the town, but I felt unequal to the effort. W. rode into the town one day and took a few photographs. The castle is a mere shell, the interior buildings having been destroyed, as at Urfa.

I received a visit from the native agent, and a deputation of a score or so of the Armenian Protestants who are under the teaching of the American missionaries. Of the American missionaries themselves one family had left for Wan the very day of our arrival; the other, Mr. Knapp, was good enough to pay me a visit subsequently, but, unfortunately, I was very unwell at the time and quite unequal to the effort of receiving his visit. From the Armenian Protestants themselves, and from other sources of information, I received the impression that their cause was not making progress in Bitlis, and the fact of the reduction of the missionary staff seemed to confirm this impression. I also received a visit from the principal priest of the Armenians, the vicar of the Armenian bishop, to whom I communicated the contents of the Archbishop of Canterbury's circular letter to the Eastern prelates. He expressed much gratification, and paid compliments to the English Church. From him, and another Armenian priest who subsequently visited me, I obtained information about the religious condition of the town, which I collated with that previously obtained from the Protestants. The population, I gathered, amounted to about 25,000 persons, of whom only about 2,000 were Christians. Of the Christians about 1,700 are ancient Armenians, and about 300 Armenian Protestants. The Armenians have four churches besides the monastery which we saw in the valley outside the town, twelve priests, six schools, and about 400 scholars;

the Americans have one missionary and a native assistant, two schools and about fifty scholars. There used to be here 100 Armenians, who had adopted the papal obedience with a papal priest to minister to them, but now all but one family have rejoined their ancient Church. There are also from twenty to thirty Jacobite families without church, priest, or school. I learnt that there is no preaching among the Armenians here. "The Sunday morning service is three hours long; the people would not stay for a sermon after that."

"Is there any catechising of the children?"

"No."

"How, then, do the people learn anything about their religion?"

"Those who can read pick up a little knowledge of it, and those who cannot read do not."

On Sunday, June 25, we were so far better as to be able to resolve upon striking camp and resuming our journey next day. The mounted zaptieh whom the pasha selected as our guide and guard rode up in the evening to introduce himself and take orders. He rather gave himself airs, and assured us that he was a very fine fellow, and was always appointed to attend the pasha and great people, that he knew the whole country intimately, and would lead us by a short and pleasant cut. Philippus was so impressed by his pretensions that he paid him the compliment of treating him, like a visitor, with coffee. We, on the contrary, were rather unfavourably impressed.

CHAPTER XII.

BITLIS TO WAN.

Monday, June 26.—Up by dawn and off soon after sunrise, feeling not very strong, but very glad to get out of hospital. We rode up between the hill-tops which form the head of the Bitlis ravine, and in about half an hour our boastful zaptieh justified my opinion of him by admitting that he had missed the road, and leading us in a scramble down one hill and up another to regain the right track. The right track turned out to be anything but a pleasant one, and not fit for baggage horses. We soon heard the katurji loudly expressing his opinion of the guide and his short cut. In places it was so steep an ascent that we had to hold on hard to the saddle, or we should have slipped off behind; in some places indeed we had to dismount. Moreover, the track was so narrow between rocks, or with a rock on one side and the ravine on the other, that it was barely passable for a horse with a bulky load. We horsemen managed it all well enough, but one of the baggage horses came to grief. Hearing a great cry behind, I turned round in the saddle just in time to see him turning somersaults, literally head over heels, down the steep hill-side, while the katurji was standing in a tragical attitude with his arms extended to heaven, calling Allah to witness the wickedness of the zaptieh. It was the horse who carried the bulky bedding on one side, and the tents to match on the other. I daresay they broke his fall, and brought him up after three or four turns. His load was soon loosened, and he relieved us considerably by

scrambling to his feet; there were no bones broken, but the poor beast was a good deal shaken, and had an ugly wound where the rocks had scraped off both skin and flesh. We felt that if it had been one of the saddle horses which had fallen, his rider would have had a very good chance of having his neck broken in the fall. How the beasts shame us men with their patient endurance of pain and willingness to labour! In a very few minutes he was reloaded with his bulky burdens, and was scrambling desperately up the hill-side to regain the track.

To-day, for the first time, we passed over the snow line and soon began to descend the other side of the mountain. Very soon we were amazed to see a vehicle, drawn by four beasts, occupying the road. True, the vehicle was only a rude sledge, and the four beasts were only two pairs of oxen; but it was curious to have passed through all the plains without seeing anything like a vehicle (except the 'bus at Diarbekr), and to find it at last up here among the mountains. But we soon noticed another fact equally curious. In all the plains we had seen hundreds of miles of land left barren, and other hundreds of miles with the rudest possible culture; but here we found an elaborate system of irrigation, and every little valley which afforded a few acres of soil washed down from the mountain sides elaborately cultivated. I suppose the presence of water is the reason of the difference. Among the mountains there are springs, "which run among the hills," and that is the one element wanting in these hot climates to make the soil fertile. This explains, what I never clearly understood before, the ancient fertility of the hill country of Palestine. We made a very short day's journey, and stopped at an Armenian village called Ant (or Andt) for the rest of the day and the night. As we rode through the village street the women came out and stood at their doors unveiled to look at us. I shall be ungallant enough to say that they were rather coarse-featured, swarthy,

unkempt, untidy, and dirty, with nose rings in one nostril, and headdresses of coins. We halted on a charming plot of grass close by the church, which was like a village green, and unloaded, and began to pitch our camp. Our zaptieh here showed the result of his experience as a guide of the "pashas and other great persons," by ordering the people about in a hectoring way, and impressing all the bystanders into our service. We took the opportunity to read him a lesson, by scolding him for his conduct, and ordering him to ask for two men who would act as our watchmen at night, and who should be engaged also to render any other services required, and should receive a proper backshish.

Our camp was a very pleasant one; the morning's ride had refreshed without fatiguing us; the people were friendly, and we passed a very agreeable day.

The head man of the village and the village priest came to pay us a visit; we invited them to share our luncheon, and had an interesting conversation with them. The priest had only been ordained a year before. He was a native of the village, who had been taught to read a little when a boy in a monastery,* where he was one of the servants. He had kept up his reading, and a year ago, on the occurrence of a vacancy, the head man had presented him, with the concurrence of some authority at Bitlis, to the bishop of a neighbouring monastery,* who had ordained him priest.

After luncheon we looked at the church. It is a very plain stone structure, with nothing externally architectural about it and nothing ecclesiastical in its appearance except that a number of small crosses *patée* (✕) are scratched on some of the stones. Attached to the west end is another lower and wider building of inferior construction, which looks like a mere outbuilding. On entering the latter building by a small and low door, we

* Probably the great monastery at Bitlis.

found that this is the nave of the church—a perfectly plain room, which might be a stable, with its roof supported by rough posts. Another small and low door gives access from the nave into the chancel. This is a comparatively lofty building, with a plain pointed-arched stone groining, very dimly lighted by one small slit in the east wall. At the east end is the sanctuary—a raised platform about three feet high, with three narrow steps in the middle by which the priest ascends to it. The altar slab (mensa), marked at the angles with crosses *patée*, is placed on a stone table, which has only one central stone pillar. A very rude wooden frame over it represents the canopy, and there is no other furniture. The church possesses some books, which were in the custody of the head man, and we could not get to see them.

We saw here for the first time the substitute for a church bell, which is general throughout the East; it consists of a short board of thin hard wood called a *semantron*; it is held suspended by a cord from the middle of one of its long edges, and is struck with a wooden mallet; the sharp and slightly sonorous sound is heard for a considerable distance, and is quite enough to answer its purpose of reaching the ears of all the villagers, and announcing to them the hours of morning and evening prayer. We found the *semantron* and mallet hung up on a peg against the outer wall of the church.

The church is endowed with three fields, to maintain it in repair, and find the requisites for Divine service.

The village consists of about thirty houses, built of stone, and finished with domical roofs of mud. The view of it from our tent was very picturesque, with a bold rocky bluff rising above it, on which grew some old gnarled walnut-trees. The valley was well irrigated, divided into fields, and well cultivated; there were some very fine walnut-trees here and there, and an abundance of other trees, and the whole settlement was the most thriving and

beautiful which we had seen in the East. Seeing numbers of wild pigeons, W. took his gun, and we strolled round the neighbourhood and shot a few birds for dinner. Returning as the sun was setting, we had again occasion to observe how the scenery of this country loses by the constant glare of the sun upon it all day long. This morning, as we rode down into the valley, it did not strike us except for its fertility and good cultivation. This evening, with subdued slanting lights, it is quite a different place. The hills are thrown into perspective one behind another; the folds of the hills and the jutting rocks have their lights and shadows; the valley looks larger when its features are thus brought out, and its features look bolder and more picturesque. I quite made up my mind that no scenery can look well under a sun which is always glaring down upon it from above, and in an atmosphere so dry and clear that there is no aerial perspective; and that a perpetual blue sky is monotonous, it needs clouds to make it picturesque; and, finally, I found myself learning to appreciate more highly than ever the charms of English landscape.

Tuesday, June 27.—W. took two photographs of the village and the church, and this delayed our departure till about an hour after sunrise. The tints of the hills as the sun rose upon them were glorious. The green hill-sides glowed like green gold, the ridges of rock like rose-coloured marble. About two hours' ride down the pleasant cultivated valley brought us into a larger valley, called Gazeldara, with a good-sized rapid salmon stream hurrying on to discharge itself into Lake Wan. We crossed a bridge, and turned up the opposite bank of the stream. The people think much of the beauty of this valley, and it is comparatively picturesque, the chain of hills on the left especially. After an easy and pleasant ride of four hours up the valley we turned out of it towards the north, and, without any great ascent or descent, found ourselves at the head of a smaller valley, whose stream

also discharged itself into Lake Wan, but in a more easterly direction. After a short ride, a turn of the valley brought us in sight of the lake, and beyond it of a grand conical mountain, with its summit covered for a long way down with snow. Its solitary grandeur was very imposing. I recognised it at once as the Suban Dagħ, the great mountain of this neighbourhood, concerning which the local tradition says that the ark first touched upon its summit as the flood subsided, but swung loose, and drifted seven days more, when it took ground on Ararat. Near it is the crater of an extinct volcano,* five miles across, with a lake within its enclosure, one of the largest of the disused chimneys through which once the internal fire found vent into upper air. There is another smaller extinct volcano at a little distance. Soon after we halted for luncheon. After luncheon W. wandered off with his gun, and shot us five pigeons for dinner. His last shot was from a considerable distance, and he observed that it was in the direction of the camp, and was rather curious to know whether it had caused us any inconvenience; when he returned I had the pleasure of satisfying his curiosity with the information that, besides his five pigeons, he had also shot one Armenian in the back of the neck, but fortunately the shot was so far spent that, though it gave the man a stinging blow, it did not even break the skin. The shooting was not merely for amusement, for the pigeons were a very important accession to our bill of fare. We could not always get either mutton or fowls at our camping-places, and when we could it was of no use to me, for the fowls were very small and all bone and sinew, and afforded no nutriment whatever; the mutton was usually so tough that I could not bite it through, and after I had chewed a mouthful in the vain hope of getting some nutriment out of it, I had to throw it away; so that

* The Nimrood Dagħ.

frequently my dinner consisted of the first course and the last only—the first course a plate of concentrated soup, which we were obliged to husband, for we had not brought a sufficient stock with us; and the last course a cup of coffee. When we were fortunate enough to shoot a pigeon in the course of the day there were at least two mouthfuls of good succulent meat for a *pièce de resistance*. It was unfortunate that it took me a long time to acquire the taste for yohoort, which is the food of these pastoral countries, and it was the rich, delicious sheep's milk which kept me alive. After we had started in the morning we kept a bright look-out for the first flock which came in sight; and when we spied one the zaptieh was sent off at a canter to ask if they had milked, and if so, to bargain for milk. Presently he returned with the shepherd, bearing a quaint earthenware or brazen vessel full of the frothy milk. It was one of the events of life to raise the full vessel to one's lips and drink deep, and surrender it with a sigh of satisfaction to the ready hands of him whose turn came next. He who has not drunk sheep's milk, fresh milked, out of a large bowl, at six o'clock in the morning, after a poor breakfast and a couple of hours' ride, does not know what milk is; cow's milk is like insipid milk and water in comparison.

After luncheon, a short ride through strange geological phenomena brought us to the lake at a level spot where the shore was marshy and the land encrusted with salt, for Wan is one of the chain of salt lakes of which the Caspian is the greatest. Following the shore eastward, it soon brought us to the rocky hill-side, sloping down to the water, with a fairly good horse-track engineered through the rocks and along the slopes at a little height above the lake. It was picturesque, but the air was perfectly still, the heat was great, and the waters of the sail-less lake were without a ripple, and glared under the sun with strange wrinkles over its surface, and streaks of un-

natural livid colour, like a dead sea. After two and a quarter hours of slow riding we passed a corner of the lake where the hills fell back and left a few acres of cultivated land between their slope and the margin of the lake, where was a village; a few good trees about the village, and wooded hill-sides, made a pleasant picture. A little further a wild duck with a flock of ducklings broke out from the reeds, and paddled straight out into the lake. W. sent a charge of shot after them, and knocked over one or more of the little ones; but they were too far out, and I discouraged the idea of stripping and swimming after them. We were in sight of a bold timbered bluff, behind which three large masted boats were moored, and on whose back was a village, at which we halted for the night, and camped on the village green, surrounded by the huts of the village. W. and Deacon George started off at once to bathe in the lake, gun on shoulder for the chance of another shot at the wild ducks. I sat in my arm-chair, and amused myself, as I had often done before, with watching the evening's routine of the katurjis. First they unloaded; then while one lent a hand to pitch the tent, the other picketed the horses. The routine was always the same. Three iron pegs were driven deep into the earth, and a strong rope passed through them so as to form two sides of a square, and to this the horses were attached by their head-ropes; the katurjis sleep in the middle of the square to protect their horses from thieves. The pack-saddles are left on till they are cool. By the time the tent is pitched the horses are ready to be groomed. Each katurji takes his share. First they are methodically dressed all over with the clicking curry-comb, then rubbed over with a dry cloth; the groom always spits on his cloth when he rubs the eyes and ears and face. The pack-saddle is put on again; it is a big, clumsy, heavy wooden affair, but is always kept on lest the horses' backs should get cold. When they are all groomed the katurji

goes round again amidst the whinnying of his horses, fills their nose-bags with barley, and leaves them to eat their supper. Then the head katurji, a good Mussulman, goes to the neighbouring stream or spring and washes his hands and face, spreads out his prayer carpet, and gravely and reverently goes through his evening devotions. The second katurji, who never says his prayers—at least within our observation—occupies himself with making a fire, and doing the cooking for himself and his chief. Often they find their supper reinforced by something which Philippos can add from his department, and sometimes they get a cup of coffee from him. They smoke a pipe or two out of the bashi's hubble-bubble, then roll themselves up in a blanket, covering the head so completely that they look like two bales of "soft goods," stretch themselves on the ground in the midst of their cattle, and apparently sleep without a break till morning. It is a real pleasure to see Hassan at his work. He is a fine, well-made, strong fellow, with a fine Eastern face. He does everything without the slightest fuss, with a gravity, method, strength, and cleverness which it does one good to see. They never beat their horses; they carry neither whip nor stick. The horses are all free; one is always the leader of the troop, and is jealous of his precedence, and the rest follow their leader in single file. For the most part they obey the katurji's voice, and if one fail he picks up the nearest stone and throws it at him, usually, from constant practice, with accurate aim, though often it hits the load instead of the beast, but that is enough to enforce discipline.

Travelling day after day with the horses always under one's eye, one soon distinguishes their different characters. The horse I ride, an intelligent, gentle, easy-paced little creature, is getting old. On perfectly level ground travelling at a walk it will stumble every ten minutes, but at a hand-gallop it will pick up its legs cleverly, and will scramble up and down the mountain paths and climb the

slippery rocks without a fault. The leader of the caravan is as vain as a woman of his bell, and as jealous of his precedence; if one rode before him he would sometimes rush angrily past to regain the lead, and it required a little quickness sometimes in throwing one's leg over the horse's neck to avoid having one's thigh ripped up by the jagged corner of a tin box, which formed part of the leader's load. Then there was a Roman-nosed mule, whose characteristics were ill-temper and obstinacy; and a thick underbred horse which had no character at all, it was simply a lazy drudge. Lastly, there was a little ass, which the second katurji had brought for his own riding, a humble little creature, which ambled along with the rest, and got through his day's work as well as any of them; his characteristic was humble usefulness.

Wednesday, June 28.—Started at sunrise, turned away from the lake over the shoulder of the hill, down its long sloping back, and so into a broad, fertile, well-cultivated valley, surrounded by rounded hills of moderate height. The valley contained several villages. We passed by one in which a rather large new church, with the very unusual feature of a gabled roof, rose high out of the cluster of domed houses. Here we halted for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour; sent into the village for a bowl of milk and drank it as we stood, remounted and rode on.

We halted for luncheon at a spot where a spring broke out, about half-way down a long descent, and a village a little way off on the left gave us a chance of getting milk and bread. Here we saw another pastoral scene. The spot where we had halted was on the desolate side of a moorland hill covered with coarse grass, but it turned out that the water which had attracted us made the place the rendezvous of the flocks of the neighbouring village; and while we were lying about on the ground after luncheon—we under the roof of the tent, the servants under the shade of the luggage—the flocks of sheep and lambs were led

down by the shepherdesses to water and to be milked. The two flocks were kept separate, in spite of their loud complaints—those of the lambs in shrill incessant bleating, responded to by the hoarser and less frequent voices of the ewes—till the mothers had all been milked, then their lambs were allowed access to them ; every lamb ran to its mother, and the scene finished amidst the general satisfaction of the woolly people, the lambs butting against their udders and wagging their tails with delight, and the mothers lifting their heads from the coarse grass, and turning to bestow a caress of quiet maternal gratification.

After luncheon our road led us across a range of higher hills ; we climbed up a rugged track, scrambled down a very steep descent on the other side, passed a solitary tomb high up the hill, which is a great place of pilgrimage once a year to the Christians of the whole country round, and so round the hill-sides, gradually descending into a long narrow valley which wound for miles round the foot of the hills, with a stream running through it. The sun was set already, and as we were still more than an hour from our intended camping-place, I insisted upon camping where we were. Here was water, and there was a village near where the katurjis could get barley for their horses, the two indispensable requisites for a camping-place, and there were two or three Koord tents already pitched on the ground, showing that it was probably the best place we should find in the immediate neighbourhood. Our whole party was beginning to give way under the hardships of the journey. Hadji Katurji, fine fellow as he was and used to the life, had been ill and helpless all the afternoon ; Philip the cook ditto. I could sit on my horse and travel on in a dull, listless way as long as the horse could go, but when we came to our halting-place I could do nothing more than get heavily out of the saddle and stumble to the nearest convenient spot, and lie down on the ground. George also was not well.

The bragging zaptieh came out in a new character this evening, and rose greatly in our estimation. While Hadji was lying groaning on the ground the zaptieh went to comfort him, spoke to him cheerily, knelt down on the ground beside him and prayed for him, and then went off to help to make up the fire and cook the dinner. W. made the soup, and the zaptieh fried the chicken, and made himself generally cheery and useful. It was rather a miserable camp that night.

Thursday, June 29.—Next day the katurji and cook were still ill, and others of us not very well. We got loaded with some difficulty, and started late; plodded wearily through a monotonous day's journey over hill and valley, and camped at night at a considerable village, with the prospect that early to-morrow we should get into town within reach of the bazaars and an American doctor.

Friday, June 30.—I slept all last night a feverish sleep. I had a sensation that everything had fallen into ruin, and chaos was come again; and when I awoke in the night I awoke in such a state of confusion, that it took me some time to assure myself that I was not lying amidst the rubbish of the world, and that I was not in an equally disintegrated and "rubbishy" state. It was only slowly that my senses seemed to clear themselves, and I was able to realise distinctly that I was really lying under the tent, that I was whole and sound, that I was lying on a mattress covered by a blanket—in short, that I was really myself and the world going on as usual.

Hadji was not better this morning, but Philip was about again, and we got off in fair time. We rode two hours across a plain, bordered by the lake. At a little distance from the shore is a barren rocky islet, called Akhtamar, rising to a height of some hundred feet, with a church and convent on a small plateau half-way up. The whole scene was very picturesque and poetical. The island is said to have contained, from a very remote antiquity, a castle of the

Armenian kings. Mr. Layard* attributes the foundation of the monastery to the seventh century, and the building of the present church to the tenth. He describes it as a cross church, with a hexagonal tower and conical capping at the intersection of the cross, with the upper part of the interior of the building almost covered with broad bands and panels of sculpture in bas-relief. The Archbishop of Akhtamar in 1113 declared himself independent of the Armenian Patriarch of Echmiadsin, but he is recognised only by a small number of Christians in the neighbourhood of Wan. We crossed a brook by a bridge, and it took us another two hours to cross the ridge of a low hill. At the further side of the hill was the thriving village of Edremit, amidst gardens and groves, and on the last rocky spur of the hill the ruins of a fortress and an ancient town. A beautiful and abundant spring of water gushed out of the rock-hewn cisterns. We only halted for a deep draught of water for man and beast, and pushed on two hours more by the margin of the lake, with the town of Wan and its remarkable castle before us all the way. There was a fresh north breeze blowing, which raised tiny "white horses" all over the dark waters of the lake and drove them, charging in squadrons, on the shallow shore. I think the cool breeze did me good; there were numerous clouds overhead too, which every now and then screened us from the heat of the sun. I rode the six hours without fatigue, and at the end of it found I had more appetite than I had had for weeks before—appetite enough to make an instant demand upon Philip-pus's saddle-bags, and eat some cold lamb and dry bread found there, and then to eat some soup and kabobs an hour afterwards. W., however, had been gradually sickening all morning, and fancied that the malarious plain of Wan affected him, while Hassan continued as ill and wretched as ever.

* "Nineveh and Babylon," p. 413.

CHAPTER XIII.

WAN.

THE salt lake of Wan is from 25 to 30 miles long by about 9 to 12 miles broad. On its west side is the grand conical mountain of Suban Dagħ, further north the great extinct volcano above mentioned, and other mountain chains surround it on all sides, sometimes sending spurs down to the margin of the lake, but leaving numerous and wide spaces of fertile plain and valley. There are several towns round its margin, as Akhlat and Vastan ; but Wan was probably always the capital of the district. There are some remarkable traditions about the place. One is that it was the site of Paradise, and a Persian proverb still speaks of any very beautiful place as being beautiful as Wan. It may have been a beautiful country when its fertile plains and valleys were well cultivated by a numerous population, dotted over with villages embowered in gardens and groves, the lower slopes of its hills clothed with oliveyards and vineyards, the uplands covered with sheep feeding among walnut and mulberry trees, and its higher mountains decked with forests of oak and beech ; when the central lake was enlivened by the sails of boats and galleys ; lake and plain, upland and forest, fenced in on all sides by mountain ranges, with snow streaked sides, while Suban Dagħ dominated the whole country with its snow-capped cone. But it is not a Paradise now. Then there is the tradition, already mentioned, that the ark touched on Suban Dagħ before it floated off to Ararat. There are traditions, too, of great geological changes ; in ancient



VIEW OF THE TOWN AND CASTLE OF WAN.

times, it is said, the road from Wan to Akhlat was straight across what is now covered with the waters of the lake. Wan seems always to have been the capital of the country. Tradition says that the city was founded by Semiramis, who called it after her own name, Shemiramgerd. The rock always afforded an impregnable position for a fortress, and the arrowhead inscription cut on its southern face seems to show that it was early occupied. It derives its modern name from King Wan, who rebuilt the city a short time before the era of Alexander the Great; it was restored by Vagh Arshag, brother of the first Persian king of the great dynasty of the Arsacidæ (B.C. 150). It passed into the hands of the successive Eastern conquerors—the Seljouk Tartars, Tamerlane, the Turkomans, the Osmanlis, who captured it in 1533, and it is still one of the great strongholds of the Turkish dominions.

The castle rock is a detached ridge of rock about 600 yards long and about 300 to 400 feet high, which rises sheer out of the plain, with a steep slope on the north, and a sheer precipice all along the southern face, leaving a narrow space on the summit, the whole of which is strongly fortified. It is divided into three parts: the central part is the longest and highest, and upon it are placed the main buildings of the castle; the two extremities are at a lower level, and have been cut off from the centre by deep and broad fosses cut across the rock, but these ends are also carefully fortified. The sloping north side of the rock, which is the most accessible, has no less than five successive lines of wall, strengthened by towers. The southern side has only a wall on the summit of the precipice, and one or two towers at lesser heights, where a little natural platform of rock seemed to offer a possible footing.

The antiquity of the place is illustrated by a number of cuneiform inscriptions, which were first copied by the

German traveller Schulz, and published by him in the "Transactions of the Asiatic Society of France," vol. ix. The most ancient of them, Mr. Layard says, are in a character identical with that on the oldest monuments of Assyria. Some are carved on various parts of the castle rock, others are on stones built into comparatively modern buildings. They chiefly record victories of ancient kings, with a list of the spoils or sacrifices to the gods, with a list of the victims, and contain the names of kings and countries which will probably be helpful some day in making out the ancient history of the district. The great inscription on the southern face of the castle rock, visible to all beholders, is a trilingual inscription of Xerxes, the son of Darius, very nearly word for word the same as those of the same king at Ecbatana and Persepolis.

Other features of interest here are suites of excavated chambers in various parts of the castle rock. Mr. Layard explored some of them, and gives a plan and description of one suite.* They were probably constructed for the reception of the tombs of the ancient kings of the district. Some of these chambers have their legends. A vaulted recess on the north side of the rock is called the Treasure Gate, and is held to be a sacred spot both by Christians and Mussulmans. Beneath it, the story says, an iron gate, guarded by genii armed with swords of flame, closes the entrance to a vast hall filled with all manner of riches. The magic words which alone can open the portal are contained in the cuneiform inscription sculptured beside the entrance. At night a serpent keeps watch at the entrance, and retires at break of day into a hole near the cave. A rock some distance east of the city also contains numerous excavated chambers. A lofty recess in the face of this rock, which contains a cuneiform inscription, is called the Shepherd's Gate, from a tradition that a shepherd having fallen asleep beneath it was told in a dream the

* "Nineveh and Babylon," p. 396.

magic word which would open its portal. Awakening, he spoke his "open sesame," the stone floors flew open, and he entered a vast hall filled with treasures. He filled his shepherd's bag with gold and returned, but finding that he had left his staff behind, he again spoke the charm and re-entered to recover it. But the doors had closed behind him, and he had forgotten the word. His dog waited outside till nightfall, and then went home and brought the shepherd's wife to the place. She could hear her husband's voice behind the stone portals, but no one could give him help. And the voice of the imprisoned shepherd is occasionally heard even to this day by the terrified passer-by.

The modern town is situated at the foot of the castle rock, on the southern side. It is surrounded by a wall, chiefly of mud, with a moat, and a lower second wall outside the moat not kept in repair. It contains two mosques and a church, and a labyrinth of narrow, dirty streets. A suburb, called the Gardens, stretches from the town eastward for a couple of miles to the foot of the Varak mountain. Most of the Christian families live here, and have two churches. Morning and evening the long street, shaded by willow trees, is alive with merchants and clerks walking to or from their places of business in the bazaars of the town. The houses of the American missionaries are at the eastern extremity of this suburb, and nearly at the foot of the mountain. We pitched our tents on the open grassy plain at the foot of the castle rock, just outside the west wall of the town. We sent a special messenger with a letter to the patriarch announcing our arrival at Wan, and our intention to reach Kochanes by Friday at latest.

Saturday, July 1.—W. really ill with fever, Hassan still ill, I far from well. In the afternoon things looking worse rather than better, I rode up through the Gardens to visit Dr. Reynolds, the medical member of the American mission here, to beg him to come and look at our invalids. He

came early on Monday morning, and very kindly pressed us to take up our residence at his house, but I was unwilling to lay such a burden upon his hospitality. He pronounced our ailments all to arise from the malaria, and prescribed vigorous treatment accordingly. We only remained in Wan long enough to recruit our own health and hire fresh horses to Kochanes. Our location was picturesque enough. Northward we looked up to the castle rock, with its steep precipices crowned by the embattled wall, over which peeped a few tall towers, one with a flagstaff and the dome and minaret of the castle mosque at the corner. Below, to the east, was the double wall of the town, with houses, domes, and minarets rising above it. To the south were the dark and lofty ranges of the Hakkiari mountains, looking stern and desolate, with no sign of life or vegetation, and their summits streaked with snow. If we had been approaching the mountains now for the first time their aspect would have been very formidable, but we had already been among them and knew their secrets, and did not fear them. In the mornings and evenings there were fine effects of floating cloud and gorgeous colouring.

The morning and evening experiences were much pleasanter than those of the night. Horses were picketed here and there all over the plain, and there were grooms with dogs on the watch to protect them. These dogs all over the plain were barking at intervals all night long, responding to the barking of the dogs in the city. One solitary bark in the city would begin it, then a general chorus through the streets would take it up; this would be answered from the plain; the noise would last some minutes till they began to get tired, and left off one by one, then rose and fell again, till it ceased entirely for awhile, only to break out afresh just as one was beginning to doze. There was one brute somewhere near our camp who was most aggravating; he threw his whole strength into making his bark as loud and sharply defined as possible,

and he persisted in it when the others were getting tired, and provoked them into answering his challenge again and again, and always left off last.

On Monday morning, July 3, there was a sharp hail-storm of large stones, many of them egg-shaped, and the size of a small filbert. W. was much worse ; Dr. Reynolds came down, put him on horseback, and carried him off to his own house, out of the malaria of the low ground on which we were camped. I remained behind to arrange about a new team of horses. We wished to re-engage Hassan, but he was still so ill that he declined to undertake the further journey.

We had a little experience of Turkish dealings. George, with the assistance of a Nestorian living here, Daoud by name, had made an engagement with some katurjis who had come from the neighbourhood of Kochanes, and were glad to get an engagement back again, and we settled to start next day. This, however, did not suit the katurji bashi, a kind of recognised chief of the katurjis, whose percentage very likely was affected by a direct engagement, so he proceeded to upset our arrangements. The pasha sent him a requisition for horses for the service of Government, and he pounced upon the horses we had hired. I sent a messenger to the pasha to complain. The pasha was very polite, bade a kavass go into the bazaar with my messenger and bid the katurji bashi give me immediately six good and sufficient horses. I thought my business was done; but I observed that the natives were not so confident; they hinted that though the pasha had given the most satisfactory orders it was possible they might not be obeyed. They were quite right. The rascal of a katurji bashi speedily brought three horses on the ground, and went off to fetch three more, and we began to pack up. But the other three did not arrive. At length, late in the afternoon, they came; but then the men found they had to go into the bazaar to get ropes for loading. Meantime it began to

rain hard and steadily ; we had to replace the tent walls, which had been taken down. The ground began to get soaked with wet, the evening grew cold, and I began to feel ill and shivery. So at last I gave up the attempt to get off that evening, got upon Daoud's horse, cantered up to Dr. Reynolds' house, and claimed the hospitality which he had several times, with great kindness, pressed upon me. I found W. better, but still very weak and ill, and went to bed very thankful that it was a bed proper, with sheets and pillows, and was under the shelter of a good roof, instead of being a mattress laid on a spongy plain, with nothing but the dripping canvas between us and the storm.*

* From a letter received since my return, I learn that a number of Armenians residing in Wan have written to Bishop Gobat at Jerusalem, asking him to ordain a priest for them. I have mentioned in the text that some of the people at Suarek had sent a similar request, and that an Armenian, ordained by Bishop Gobat, was residing at Diarbekr. It is earnestly to be hoped that the Diarbekr precedent will not be followed in other cases. For the Church of England to encourage schisms from the Armenian and other Eastern Churches would greatly injure our chance of being able to influence those Churches in the direction of revival and self-reformation. To ordain clergymen for such separatist congregations would be, it seems to me, an act contrary to all Church order.

The importance of the Armenian Church is, I imagine, little known in England. They are the most numerous Christian community, numbering about three millions in Asiatic Turkey, besides, perhaps, as many more in Russia and Persia. Their Patriarchial See is at Echmiadzin, near Eriwan. The Armenians are a very highly endowed race ; physically a tall, slender, high-bred looking race, with a very fine type of face ; I was very much struck with the finely-cut features and pleasing expression which was quite general among the young men. They are intellectually acute, and they are of an energetic, enterprising, ambitious disposition. They are the great commercial race of the East. It is said of them that the three degrees of comparison in commercial astuteness are, positive Jew, comparative Greek, superlative Armenian. From a religious point of view, they are the most enlightened of all the Christian communities of the East. For some time past there has been a reforming party among them ; but the hierarchy is conservative, and among the ruling, influential Armenians in Constantinople there is said to be a tendency to scepticism, which is antagonistic to Church

CHAPTER XIV.

WAN TO KOCHANES.

Tuesday, July 4.—In the morning we found that during the night fresh snow had fallen on the mountains; horizontal layers of cloud floated across some of them, some were partially enveloped in cumuli; over and through the clouds the white peaks, sun-lighted, shone with fine effect.

Our invalid was better, and though weak with illness, the mountain air was likely to benefit him, so about nine we set off to overtake the caravan, which had started earlier. Our way wound up among rounded grassy hills till noon, when we halted for luncheon beside a copious fountain. In the course of the morning we met our special messenger returning from Kochanes, charged with an answer. The incident was quite Eastern. We all stopped on the road, the messenger kissed hands and presented his letter. It was wrapped first in a small square of linen, then in a square of paper, then the envelope appeared with a broad band of paper round it secured by the patriarch's great seal, lastly the letter was extracted from its envelope, placed in the hands of the interpreter, and read. In ceremoniously courteous phrase it expressed pleasure at the announced visit of the Archbishop's commissioner, and

revival and reform. The reforming party looks to England with great interest; and it seems as if the Church of England might, by judicious action, at once repress the tendency of the more enthusiastic to secede from the Armenian Church, and help to promote a better system of education, a revival of spiritual life, and ecclesiastical reform within this the most ancient of all national Churches.

assured him of a friendly welcome. The messenger received his backshish as a messenger of good news, and went on his way rejoicing, and we also went on our way, glad to have put ourselves into such near communication with the object of our journey. We did not start again till after three; in another hour crossed the summit of the hill and descended—a long descent—into a valley, in which were several villages surrounded by groves and gardens. At 5.30 we halted at one of these villages for the night, our invalid being better at the end than at the beginning of the day's work. The situation of the village being low we pitched our camp on one of the housetops; it was a new experience to drive tent-pegs into the roof of the house, and finally to light our fire there. Next door to us, and a few feet higher, was the grass-grown roof of the church; the church-bell or semantron was erected *en permanence* on a housetop on the other side of the village street. About six it was beaten for prayers, and after prayers the priest paid us a visit. It is an Armenian village of about twenty or thirty houses. The priest says prayers every morning and evening; on Sundays and holy days he translates the Gospel for the day into the vernacular and gives an exposition of it. Immediately adjoining our housetop was a large square tower, with its door at the first story. Years ago, when the country was still more disturbed than it is now, the tower was the village fortress, in which the inhabitants sought safety when a party of marauding Koords came down from the mountains upon them.

Wednesday, July 5.—We did not get off till 6.30, crossed the remainder of the plain, and ascended by steep zig-zags the sheer slope of the hills beyond. The descent on the other side was equally steep and more rugged, and we got down it with some difficulty. The horses were a very poor team of weedy, grass-fed brutes; the katurjis were equally feeble and poor-spirited, and we had loads

coming off, and horses falling, and the men not equal to the emergency. Oh ! for Hadji Hassan and his clever, hardy horses ! We did not know how fortunate we were in him until we lost him. If it had not been for Daoud with his strength and high spirit we should almost have broken down by the way.

We halted for luncheon beside a small river, not far from a village with a castle, the residence of a Koord bey, now absent in Zozonne.* Resumed our way up the hill again, taking the river for our guide, not winding tamely round the hills so as to turn their flank, but ascending straight up towards their craggy snow-covered summits. Towards the end of the journey our guides rode forward to reconnoitre a camping-ground, and we strayed off the slightly marked track and found ourselves on the side of a great hill which sloped steeply and smoothly down to the torrent bed, trying in vain to make out whether one of the slightly marked tracks before us was our road, or whether they were all sheep tracks wandering round the hill-side. When we met our guides returning by another path we concluded that we had strayed out of our way ; we had to retrace our steps a few hundred yards, and camped beside the mountain stream. We had attained such a height that we were very near some patches of snow, so near that one of the men fetched a supply of snow to cool our drink. In the night the scene looked wild and grand by the moonlight, and the white tent looked like a bold intruder among the snow-covered craggs and silent solitudes of the mountains. It was very cold last night and to-night, with very heavy dews.

Thursday, July 6.—I had to rouse the servants this morning, and then to give them a scolding for dawdling over their breakfast so late as six o'clock. They wanted

* In summer the inhabitants of the plains and valleys drive their flocks up into the mountains, and encamp there. This is called going into Zozonne.

to take an extra day over the journey ; I was resolved to press on with no unnecessary delay.

Our way after all did not lie right up among the highest peaks at whose base we had camped, but here quitted the stream which had guided us up from the valley, turned to the right over a shoulder of the mountain, across a table-land, struck a ravine, and so descended into the valley on the other side. About noon, when we had nearly finished the descent, we saw a herd of gazelles, which, startled by our appearance, bounded up the opposite mountain side. The leader had almost gained the very summit, and I was watching to see the herd appear in relief against the sky as they crossed the brow, when he turned round, and, with all the rest at his heels, raced down the mountain side, crossed the ravine, and up the slope which we were descending. The zaptieh flung himself off his horse and began to stalk them up the hill. W., forgetting his fever and his fatigue, put a cartridge into his rifle and followed ; but the gazelles were too fleet for the sportsmen, and did not let them get within shot. We lunched beside a considerable stream, whose waters, we were told, flow down to Mosul, and which I assume to be a feeder of the Zab. After luncheon, over the very next hill we had to ford a still larger stream, which, we were told, is joined by the former at a little distance. In a few hundred yards we had to ford it again ; and still a few hundred yards further Daoud propounded a theory that the path which ran along the sides of the hills overhanging the stream had been carried away by a landslip, further on, and that we must once more ford the stream and make our way along the other side. What we had to do was to climb the opposite hill, and then to work across country, cutting off a bend of the stream, and so descend and ford it once more. Climbing the opposite hill was not pleasant work ; the horse I rode had neither strength, nor courage, nor cleverness, and was not to be depended

upon in an emergency; moreover the baggage horses were scrambling about in all directions, and not unfrequently in a direction exactly above one's self, and if one of the weedy brutes had come head over heels, and they seemed always on the point of doing so, he would have carried oneself down the hill-side and into the torrent with him. However, we got safely up, and made our way across the trackless upland and descended into the valley further on. Here we found ourselves in a marshy valley with a considerable village at its upper end. The katurjis wished to halt there for the night. I refused for two reasons: first, it was an unhealthy place for our convalescent to sleep in; and, secondly, I had announced our arrival to the patriarch for Friday, and I was resolute to keep the engagement if possible. Accordingly I cut short the controversy by pushing forward, and leaving the rest to follow. Beyond the village we took a mountain torrent for our guide and plodded slowly on and up until the sun set, and then began to look out for a camping-place. At this juncture we met a Nestorian returning to the village below, who told us that a little further on was an encampment of Nestorians in Zozonne. It was much better to push on to them, where we should find friends, food, assistance, than to camp where we were, where there were no necessities but water and grass. Accordingly we pushed on into the gathering twilight. The road narrowed into a pass among picturesque rocks, expanded into an upland, narrowed into a pass again, which once more opened upon an upland, where at a little distance we saw the fires of tents and heard the barking of dogs. We rode forward; our Nestorian interpreter explained who we were, and we had our hands kissed, and were welcomed to the shelter of the tents.

They threw dry bushes on the glowing ashes, and made it burn up fiercely, like a bonfire; it was soon burnt "like the crackling of thorns under a pot," but the bushes were

lavishly renewed, and lighted up the picturesque scene. The tents were like those of the Koords, already described (p. 98), and the people dressed in similar outlandish dresses. They spread carpets for us, and we gladly stretched our weary limbs upon them ; they gave us bread and yohoort, which we ate with appetite, but wanted something more substantial. We looked down into the ravine and could dimly see into the depths below, and the outlines of the rocks and peaks against the sky, and chatted with the people about us, until W., tired out, wrapped himself up in a rug and fell asleep. So we passed an hour or more, and began to wish the caravan would come. At last Philippus came and told us one of the horses, the one which carried the tents, had fairly broken down, and wanted us to pass the night where we were. I did not care to sleep among the insect inhabitants of the tents ; and as we wanted food more substantial than our hosts had given us, and as it was growing very cold, I feared the effect of all these things put together upon our convalescent, who was suffering considerably from the hard day's work and want of food. Daoud volunteered to ride down on his own good horse and another borrowed from the Nestorians and bring up the tents. At last, at 10.30, we were summoned to our own tent, and found some supper ready for us ; we ate it shivering with cold, and got to bed with all our coverings over us. I promised the men, however, that I would have them up before sunrise.

Walked round the tent in the middle of the night. It was splendid moonlight, clear and cold ; the nearer rocks, brilliant with the silver light, the depths of the ravine in dark shadow, the hoarse distant roar of the torrent, the grey distant mountains, formed a scene exceedingly wild and grand.

It was worth all our hard work of the day before to see the scene which greeted us when we left the tent before sunrise next morning. We were encamped on a level

spot on the steep rocky side of the ravine; we could see the stream foaming among its rocks at the bottom, the sky line of both sides of the ravine was broken by peaks and crags; looking down the ravine the eye was led to the mountain range on the other side of the valley from which we had ascended, with its infinitely varied details of ridge and slope, and its patches of snow. The gradual brightening of the dawn, and then the first rays of sunlight on the mountain tops, and the imperceptible spread of the light downwards till the whole scene was illuminated, were very fine. The air was pure and keen, and the sense of exhilaration was delightful. Behind a rock near the tent we found a natural basin of spring water, in which we washed, then breakfasted while the caravan was loading, and got off in excellent time.

It was in some respects the most picturesque ride we had had in our whole journey. We rode right up the upland, where there was no track, towards the mountain summits. For weeks past we had seen the snow on the highest mountains. For days patches of it had been about us and a little above us, to-day we rode right up into it; it filled up ravines and hollows, and clothed the sheltered slopes. The mountain streams which flowed down every ravine had tunnelled their way right through the deep drifts, so that by stooping a little we could scramble into them; here and there the fall of an undermined portion of a drift left a cliff of glittering snow, and enabled us to measure its depth. Water flowing everywhere. In one place we pass along a hill-side famous for its "hundred springs"; at every few yards a spring breaks out of the hill-side; a little further there is a table-land where the wild swine have quite recently rooted up the turf, and we scan all the neighbouring hollows and ravines in the hope of seeing and perhaps getting a shot at them, and up the wild rocky ravine on the right is a very likely place to meet a family of bears. See! there is some living creature among the rocks yonder, but

whether bear or boar, or what it is, no one can determine. W. and Daoud are off their horses at once, load their rifles, and hasten off with all the eagerness of young men to kill something worth killing. After a long walk up the ravine back they return, Daoud carrying the game over his shoulder. It was an old goat we had seen, which scampered off on the approach of the sportsmen, leaving her kid behind, which Daoud contrived to catch. I took the part of my dumb fellow-creature, and we left the poor little thing on the green turf, where its mother would soon rejoin it when we were out of sight.

Further on we find a large encampment of Koords. It is a tribe from the neighbourhood of Mosul, who every summer leave the hot pestilential plain of Mosul and come up here with their flocks for pasture. I can imagine nothing more delightful than the contrast. We halted at their tents, and drank a draught of the rich mountain milk.

Still we ascend the sloping upland, the scenery growing wilder, the mountains more covered with snow, the wind bleak, the whole scene winterly, and the temperature to match; I kept my horseman's cloak on all day and was not too warm.

Turn round: "Do you see the snowy hill in the far distance, over the shoulder of the nearer mountain?"

"I think I see what you mean, but it is very indistinct."

"That is Ararat!"

I try hard to distinguish it, but can hardly with a good conscience say I have seen it. A little further on look to the right and left. To the right, down the vast valley, between two ranges of the mountains, the eye travels on to a world of wild precipitous rugged mountains in the distance, which are piled up into a lofty range; not a blade of grass, not a patch of forest, not a trace of habitation can be seen; nothing can look more savage

and desolate ; but there are valleys between the crests, and there is pasture on the mountain uplands, and they shelter the Tyari tribes of the Nestorian people, who still maintain themselves in semi-independence in their inaccessible fastnesses. Look to the left, another valley with still wilder mountain forms in the middle distance, and a distant horizon of mountains, which mark the boundary of the Turkish and Persian empires ; beyond them lies our way to Oroomiah.

Here I feel very hungry, and we halt on the ridge and lunch off bread and butter and bread and honey, and a few scraps of meat which Philippus has wisely saved from last night's supper. There is no fountain near, but they bring us snow from the neighbouring wreath.

The scene grows ever wilder as we ascend and get up among the peaks which crown the range ; we ride through the fields of snow ; we have to cross a deep ravine, sinking but little into the snow which fills it ; we mount the opposite slope and attain the ridge.

There bursts upon us all at once a wonderful view.

There is a deep valley at our feet, and beyond over its opposite wall rises a magnificent granite range, with precipitous crags and sharp peaks, rising high into the heavens, plentifully patched and streaked with snow. The sun is getting low in the heavens behind us, the opposite wall of the valley is already in shadow, but the lofty granite range beyond is still in brilliant sunshine, which brings out the sharp edges of rock with strong lights and shadows, and makes the snow of dazzling whiteness.

You see, about the middle of the range, where there is a group of the sharpest ridges and slenderest needles, just beneath them, deep down in the valley at our feet is the little mountain village of Kochanes, the latest refuge of the successor of the great patriarchs of the eastern regions, who from their see in the Persian capital ruled over five-and-twenty metropolitans, and hundreds of bishops, and

thousands of clergy, and myriads of believers, extending from the north of Tartary to Ceylon, and from China to the Tigris.

Look to the right; on the sloping ground between two snow-streaked peaks, you see some white specks forming a line; they are the tents of the Turkish troops, of the Pasha of Julamerk, who are in Zozonne. They are the representatives of the Mohammedan power which a thousand years ago destroyed the wide-spread Christianity now represented by a handful of Nestorians; it is only some five-and-twenty years since they broke the independence of these mountain tribes, and this is the garrison which keeps watch and guard over Kochanes.

Although the village was apparently almost at our feet, we had still a long afternoon's journey down ravine and across upland before we should reach it. A little way down we found an encampment of Koords, and knowing that we should not reach Kochanes till late, we begged for hospitality. We were received by a fine-looking, middle-aged man, who welcomed us into his black tent. On a rug near its entrance sat the father of our host, a venerable man 100 years old, his son told us, and he certainly had all the appearance of very great age; he looked at us when we saluted him, but his faculties seemed to be torpid; he showed little further interest in us, or in anything which was going on about him, but sat still on his rug, mechanically smoking the chibook which from time to time was replenished and relighted for him. After a while another old man came in from a neighbouring tent to see us, who would have seemed to us very old but for the more venerable appearance of the patriarch we have described. The women soon brought us in a welcome meal of pastoral fare—eggs, yohoort, and milk, and native bread fresh from the oven.

The descent was very picturesque, down rocky hillsides, along steep ravines, across torrents which foamed

and roared down every hollow, fed by the snow-drifts and patches, getting deeper and deeper down into the twilight valley, while the opposite mountains presented continually new combinations. We passed igneous rocks of a beautiful purple with a columnar cleavage, which I should think would make noble slabs and columns. So we pushed on through rough stony fields, with patches of barley here and there, and reached the outskirts of the village.

We learned afterwards that we had missed the grand reception which had been prepared for us. The horse-men of the valley had been sent off to Bash Kalah, the half-way town on the principal road between Wan and Kochanes, and had they met us on the road they would have fired a *feu de joie*, and escorted us home. Since there was a second nearer road over the mountains by which it was possible we might come, another party of footmen had gone by that road to welcome us. But unfortunately our amateur guide Daoud fancied he could bring us by a still shorter track, which turned out to be some hours longer, and so our friends were disappointed.

At the outskirts of the village a group of men were assembled to meet us, the chief personage an old man with a venerable white beard. "That is the patriarch's father," said our guide. We dismounted and advanced to him, and exchanged brief greetings. The whole party turned to conduct us to the village. A little further was another group, and we had no need to be told that he who stepped forward a pace to greet us was the patriarch. We kissed his hand, he kissed W.'s head, said a few words of welcome, led the way into a house which he had appropriated to our use, and after a few more sentences of courtesy considerably left us to the rest and refreshment we needed.

CHAPTER XV.

THE HISTORY OF THE NESTORIANS.

THE degree of interest which the reader will take in these Nestorians will depend very much upon the amount of his acquaintance with their remarkable history. It has been our duty to read up the subject carefully ; and if the reader will be good enough not to skip the chapter, we will take pains to give him the result of our historical reading as briefly and clearly as we can.

First let us get before us the scene on which the history is to be represented. The time is the earlier half of the fifth century—about A.D. 428. Just then both divisions of the Roman empire were ruled by women. Valentinian III. reigned in Ravenna, but his mother, Placida, ruled in his name ; and the two great generals, Aetius and Boniface, upheld the failing empire against the attacks of the Goths on the north, and the Vandals in Spain. Pulcheria, the royal Church-Virgin, who had turned her palace into a religious house, nevertheless ruled the Eastern empire wisely and well in the name of her brother Theodosius II.

Persia was the great rival of the Eastern empire. The great king maintained that “manifest destiny” had assigned to him the whole of Western Asia, and that Rome was rightfully a European power only ; while the Romans held fast by force to the provinces of Asia Minor, Syria, and Mesopotamia, which the arms of their ancestors had won. Frequent wars were waged between the two powers with various fortune. Sapor (A.D. 357) invaded the debatable land, but was frustrated by the defence of

Amida. Julian in revenge led the Roman legions as far as Ctesiphon. On his death Jovian made an ignominious peace, which abandoned the provinces beyond the Tigris to Persia. Quite recently another short war had been waged between Yezdegerd and Theodosius, on an occasion which we shall state presently in speaking of the religious condition of these countries.

Armenia, long a subject of contention between the two great rivals, was on the eve of losing its independence by a division of its territory between them.

Round this *orbis veteribus notus* lay a world unknown. Beyond the Rhine and the Danube were great forests inhabited by the stalwart barbarians, who had become a terror to the civilised West. The plains of central Asia swarmed with restless tribes, who kept the Eastern empire in constant apprehension. China and Japan were almost as much an unknown world as the continent of America. Southward lay India, only partially explored by Alexander's conquests, and Arabia altogether unexplored. Beyond the Cataracts of Syene and the fringe of Mediterranean coast which constituted Pro-consular Africa, lay all Africa, a region of fables—"of anthropophagi and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders." The scene of the Nestorian history at first lies chiefly in the Eastern empire, but its actors come from all parts of the "known world"; and in the second part of the history it spreads its agents far and wide into the unknown world, and introduces a new interest into the story.

We need next a brief consideration of the religious condition of this world of the former half of the fifth century which lies under our eye. A century had passed since the reign of Constantine, and Christianity was the established religion of the empire. Armenia had adopted it as the national religion even before the conversion of Constantine, and claimed with justice to be the first Christian

kingdom. Magianism continued to be the established religion of Persia, but a regularly organised and numerous Church had long existed there, sometimes protected, sometimes persecuted by the Great King. Before the beginning of the fourth century it had already attained considerable magnitude, and was acknowledged to be an autocephalous branch of the Church. Its head exercised patriarchal power, but bore the special title of Catholicos, and his see took rank next after the great Patriarchates. This was recognised by the fathers assembled at the First General Council of Nicæa (A.D. 325).

This Church of the East had lately passed through a persecution. Marathas, a Mesopotamian bishop, who had laboured with much success among the Persians as a missionary, was sent by Arcadius as an envoy to the king, Yezdegerd. While at his court he detected and exposed the arts by which the Magi endeavoured to work on the superstitious feelings of the king. In consequence a complete religious liberty was obtained for the Christians, and it was hoped that Yezdegerd himself would become a convert (A.D. 414). But this prosperous state of things was destroyed by the indiscretion of another bishop. Abdas, in his zeal, destroyed one of the Magian temples. The king ordered him to restore the building on pain of death and retaliation on the Christian temples. Abdas refused, and the king fulfilled his threat. His disposition towards the Christians was changed, and a terrible persecution ensued. On the death of Yezdegerd (A.D. 420) the persecution broke out again under his successor, Vararnes. Some of the Christians escaped to the Roman territory. The king demanded their extradition, which the emperor refused, and a war ensued which lasted a few years, and terminated in favour of the empire. In the course of this war an incident occurred which may be properly introduced here as illustrative of the character of Eastern Christianity.

Acacius, Bishop of Amida, having learned that seven thousand Persian captives were in his neighbourhood, called his clergy together, and proposed to them to sell the gold and silver vessels of the Church, and to give the proceeds for their ransom. He maintained the ransomed captives for a little time till they had recovered from the effects of their privations, and then sent them to the Persian king as evidences of the real spirit of Christianity.

In the Church of Egypt, Cyril had obtained for his see of Alexandria a degree of political influence hitherto quite-unexampled in the history of the Church; he was a more wealthy and important person in the city than the Roman prefect, while he ruled over a hundred Egyptian bishops and thousands of fanatical monks who inhabited the deserts.

In Pro-consular Africa, which flourished under the wise and virtuous government of Count Boniface (though on the eve of the Vandal invasion), Augustine, the great theologian of the Latin Church, was passing at his see of Hippo the last years of his life.

Antioch, the great and polished capital of Syria, then a rich province, filled with fine cities and a numerous population, was the patriarchal head of the Eastern Churches of the empire; and a renowned school of theology, or rather a succession of renowned theologians, made it illustrious throughout the whole Church.

Celestine was the occupant of the distant see of ancient Rome, whose pretensions to lordship over Christ's heritage were still in the bud, and with whom our history is very little concerned.

The Church of Constantinople, still mourning the unhappy fate of Chrysostom, had lived tranquilly under his successors, Atticus and Sisinnius, until the death of the latter in the year 428 introduced the hero of another great ecclesiastical crisis into its see.

There were two candidates for the vacant see, and to

solve the difficulty which ensued the emperor was requested to nominate. He pointed out Nestorius, a monk of Antioch, of some reputation for sanctity, learning, and eloquence. The fact that he came from the same Church from which Arcadius had selected Chrysostom gave prestige to the nomination, and Nestorius was elected by the clergy and people.

Before we recount the suspicion of heresy which the new patriarch very shortly incurred, it will help to a really intelligent apprehension of the controversy if we pause for a moment and take a rapid survey of the theological condition of the Church at this moment.

When the civilised world became Christian the speculative subtle Eastern intellect began to apply itself to the problems which the new religion presented to it, as it had previously for centuries to the great questions of religion and philosophy.

The nature of the Godhead was the great subject which, in the successive problems which it offered, occupied the minds of men for three centuries of profound thought and subtle disputation. We must not fall into the vulgar error that the Church volunteered to propose to men subtle definitions on these difficult questions, and that the heretics were the people who declined to accept them. The history of all the heresies and consequent councils is this: that in speculating on one of these difficult theological questions an explanation suggested itself to some man—usually a man of considerable ability and often of conspicuous position in the Church. He was persuaded that it was a true solution of the question. He taught it to others, and so his theory spread. Other men of eminence in the Church as bishops or theologians came forward to declare that the new theory was incorrect, and that it was, or at least led in its consequences to, a dangerous subversion of the faith delivered by Christ to the apostles, and by them

to the churches. Synods met to judge the question. The error still spread, causing so much distress in men's minds and confusion in the churches, that a general council of the whole Church had at length to be summoned to effect a settlement. The bishops were always supposed to act, not as theologians supporting by argument what seemed to their minds the correct view, but as witnesses of the sense in which their churches had received from antiquity the doctrine in dispute. The truth thus ascertained was carefully expressed in some form of sound words which should guide the minds of men hereafter. Many of these heresies were ingenious speculations, plausible enough at first sight; a succeeding heresy was often the result of a very natural reaction of men's thoughts in the direction opposite to the previous error. These heresies have played an important part in the elucidation of Christian truth. They have exhibited all the various paths of theological speculation, and the Church has ascertained in the course of these three centuries of controversy which are the blind paths leading to nothing, and which the dangerous paths whose first slight divergence will lead the speculator by degrees very wide of the truth; and which are the paths in which the untheological believer may safely tread.

The first of these speculations was that of Arius, an Alexandrian presbyter, on the nature of the being of Christ. He exhausted language in expressing the elevation at which Christ stood above all other creatures, but denied that He was very God, of one essence with the Father. The First General Council of Nicæa did not succeed in discrediting the error. Supported by the Court of Constantinople, with all its influence and power, Arianism became dominant in the East, and when Constantius became master of the other half of the empire, it was pressed upon the Western bishops also. For a time it almost looked as if error would prevail against truth. But the heresy, already discredited in men's minds, collapsed when the death of Constantius deprived

it of external support, and it has never again seriously troubled the Church.

But a natural sequel to the Arian theory then came into prominence, and Macedonius' denial of the deity of the Holy Spirit called forth a second council, whose decisions were very generally accepted; and the Creed, which embodied the decisions of these two councils, is still the creed in which all Christendom concurs. The question being settled that Jesus was perfect God and perfect Man, speculation next busied itself with questions about the relations of these two natures in the unity of Christ. Apollinaris, a bishop of Laodicea, a scholar of reputation and a friend of St. Athanasius, put forth a theory on the subject. Adopting the Platonic division of man's being into body, animal soul, and intellectual soul, he maintained that Christ's human nature consisted of the two former only, and that His divinity supplied the place of the latter. The error was condemned by the second council, and it did not spread very widely or continue very long.

But in the course of these controversies occasion had been made for another. The theologians of Alexandria on one hand and of Antioch on the other had had different errors to combat—the one Arianism and Macedonianism, the other Apollinarianism. The Alexandrian divines had had to insist strongly on the divinity of Christ, and had got into the habit of regarding the two natures of our Lord in their union, and sometimes used language which seemed to imply that the two natures were no longer distinct, but blended into a third nature *sui generis*. The Syrian theologians in combating Apollinarianism had been led to insist upon the perfectness of the humanity of Christ, to analyse human nature with great subtlety, and define what is necessary to its perfectness; and they had used language which implied that the human nature of our Lord could not be perfect without a personal human basis; and the conclusion from their teaching was that

in the unity of Christ there are not only two natures but also two persons.

These speculations seem very subtle to us. The Western mind of those ages was equally averse from entering into them; and the active controversy on all these questions of the Divine Being was for the most part agitated in the East. The Eastern mind entered into them with avidity. They were discussed in the forum and the baths, the streets and the shops. The opposite parties were in great earnest in their antagonism, for they believed God's truth to be at stake. Each tried to convince the other, then to silence, then to eject the other from the communion of the Church.

It was necessary to know what heresy is, and what had been the course of previous heresies, in order to be able to understand the controversy which now arose, of which Nestorius, the Antiochene monk, newly promoted to the patriarchate of the imperial See of Constantinople, was the centre.

One of the clergy whom Nestorius had brought with him from Antioch, in a sermon in the principal church, thought proper to attack the use of the word *Theotokos*, which was frequently applied to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The word had been used by the best theologians of the past ages of the Church, not in the sense that the Virgin Mary communicated the Divine nature to the Saviour, but as conveying the fact that the Divine nature was joined with the human nature as soon as that human nature was divinely conceived, so that He who was born of the Virgin was both God and man. To the Syrian the word appeared to involve the Apollinarian heresy of a confusion between the two natures, while the people of Constantinople thought that to refuse the title *Theotokos* to the virgin mother was to cast a doubt on the divinity of her son.

Nestorius supported his friend in his own sermons, and

there was a great excitement in Constantinople, which proceeded to threats of popular violence on one side and abuses of authority on the other. The fact that some of the Egyptian monks adopted Nestorius' view brought Cyril of Alexandria into the controversy. It is to be feared that he was only too ready to assail the See of Constantinople. Alexandria had been in dignity the second see of Christendom when Constantine made a new capital at Constantinople, and the Second General Council recognising the political fact, raised the Church of Constantinople to the dignity of the patriarchate, and gave the see of new Rome precedence next after that of old Rome, and before those of Alexandria and Antioch. Theodore, the uncle of Cyril and his immediate predecessor in the see, had taken an active part in the persecution of Chrysostom, and now Cyril led the opposition to Nestorius.

We do not propose to go into the details of the controversy. It is sufficient here to say that Celestine of Rome took his side with Cyril, while John of Antioch maintained the orthodoxy of Nestorius; so that the four great patriarchates of Christendom were divided two against two. Under these circumstances a general council of the Church was summoned under the authority of Theodosius, to be held on the following Whit Sunday in the church at Ephesus where the Virgin Mary was believed to have been interred, and Candidian, a high officer of state, was commissioned to preserve order in the council.

There are two allegations made on the side of Nestorius: first, that he had not fair play in the council; second, that if his explanations of his incriminated language had been received in a friendly spirit, as Cyril's explanations of the doubtful statements in his anathemas were received, he might probably have been allowed to pass uncondemned.

When Whit Sunday came John of Antioch with his bishops had not arrived, nor had the delegates of Celestine

of Rome. It might have been legally correct to open the council at the appointed time, whoever might be absent; but the bishops did not take that course. They waited for John, waited a fortnight; then, although courteous letters had been received from John accounting for his delay, and announcing his speedy arrival, they resolved to open the council at once without him. Nestorius protested against this, for the Syrian Church maintained his orthodoxy. Theodoret, the great theologian of that age, with sixty-seven other bishops, protested against it. Candidian did not concur in the opening the council, and Nestorius refused to appear and plead till the Eastern bishops had arrived. Nevertheless it was formally opened, the question brought forward at once, Nestorius pronounced a heretic, and sentence of deposition recorded, all in the same day. Candidian refused to recognise the meeting, and formally declared it null and void. When the Eastern bishops arrived five days later they refused to recognise the proceedings of their fellows, and held another meeting, which they considered to be the legitimate council, and which pronounced Nestorius orthodox and anathematised Cyril. Candidian sent the proceedings of both meetings to Theodosius, and deputations from both sides were summoned to the presence of the emperor.

We need not go further into the details of the history. The result was that the emperor declared no decision in favour of either side; but, in the hope probably of promoting peace thereby, he called upon Nestorius to act upon a request which he had made earlier in the proceedings, to retire to his old monastery.

The validity of a council depends ultimately on its general acceptance by the Church. The council presided over by Cyril has been generally accepted as the Third General Council, and its definition of the question in dispute as the orthodox faith, viz., that there are two whole and perfect natures—the Divine nature and the

human nature—united in one person in Christ ; or in other terms, that the second Person of the Blessed Trinity to the Divine nature He had from all eternity assumed, in His incarnation, human nature.

There remains the question whether the doctrine of Nestorius, as explained by him, was really contrary to this truth. "He steadily disavowed the more odious opinions attributed to him ; he repeatedly expressed his willingness to admit the term *Theotokos*, provided it were guarded against obvious abuses. The controversy more than once appeared to be in such a position that it might have been ended by a word of explanation, but an unwillingness on both sides to concede, and personal animosities"* exaggerated the misunderstanding into a schism, of whose magnitude and importance probably neither side had the faintest anticipation. The opinions of Nestorius were, however, suppressed within the empire, and the attention of Roman Christians was speedily diverted to the consideration of a heresy in the very opposite direction.

Here we enter upon the second stage of the history, which leaves the empire and follows the progress of Nestorianism in the countries of the East beyond its boundaries. But here it is fair to say that the Nestorians themselves would object to this mode of tracing their history. They would decline to be deduced from Nestorius as their founder. If they hold the same doctrines for which Nestorius suffered, they contend that it is because the doctrines of Nestorius were orthodox, and the same as the Church of the East had held from the beginning. If we desire to trace the history of the religious ancestry of the present Nestorian Church, they will bid us recognise it in the history of the Church of the Eastern regions. No doubt the modern Nestorians are by race and by ecclesiastical lineage descended from these Eastern Christians,

* Robertson's "History of the Christian Church."

and our knowledge of them will be imperfect unless we include that portion of their history which precedes the age of Nestorius.

It is wonderfully interesting to get out of the familiar groove of our English Church history and to approach the subject of the history of the Church along this new line.

Who first introduced Christianity among the ancestors of these Nestorians ? And when they reply, the three Wise Men who were guided by a star to worship the new-born Christ, we are startled, but a little reflection shows that we cannot deny it. The Magi, in all probability, came from the country in which the ancestors of the Nestorians dwelt, and when they had returned to their own country we cannot doubt that they spoke openly of the Christ to whom they had done homage, and thus prepared the way, as John Baptist did, for His coming. St. Thomas they claim, of the apostles, as the special apostle of the East ; but they attribute the founding of their special portion of the Church to Addæus or Thaddæus, one of the seventy, and to Mari, his disciple ; and the latter they regard as the first of the line of bishops through which Mar Shimoon traces his spiritual descent. Mari, they say, established the eastern see at Ctesiphon, then the capital of the Persian monarchy. To Mar Mari succeeded Abrees, who is said by the Nestorian histories to have been nominated and consecrated by Simeon, Bishop of Jerusalem. After a vacancy of twenty-two years, Abraham, a kinsman of James the Lord's brother, succeeded ; and next Jacob, who was also of the kindred of our Lord. At his death the Eastern Church sent two of its clergy to Antioch, that one of them might be consecrated to the vacant see ; but they were seized as spies of the King of Persia, and condemned to death, together with the Patriarch of Antioch, to whom they were accredited. One of them, however, Ahad' Abhooi, escaped to Jerusalem, and was there consecrated. But this incident showed the inconvenience of the existing

arrangement, and henceforward the prelates of the Eastern Church consecrated their own chief bishop. A Nestorian writer of the fourteenth century, quoted by Dr. Badger (vol. i. p. 141), says that it was by a formal agreement of the three patriarchs that the See of Ctesiphon was thus relieved of its dependence on Antioch, and made autocephalous. Its bishop took the title of Catholicos, which, Dr. Neale says, meant procurator-general of the See of Antioch; and it was not till long after that these prelates, having the authority, assumed also the title, of patriarch. This Eastern Church grew and prospered in spite of persecution. At the time of the Nestorian controversy, the Eastern Church sympathised with their brethren of Antioch. Many of their clergy had been trained in the school of Edessa, where these views of the question in dispute had long been taught. This was a flourishing school, the prototype of the Benedictine schools of Monte Cassino and Salerno, where science and literature, as well as theology, were cultivated, which supplied clergy to the Persian Church. Ibas, the head of this school and afterwards Bishop of the see, was favourable to the views of Nestorius and inculcated them into the minds of his pupils. Barsumas, one of the doctors of the school, was created Bishop of Nisibis and exerted himself greatly to propagate the Nestorian views in Persia and the East. He induced Bubuxæus, the twenty-first Catholicos, to avow the opinions condemned at Ephesus; they obtained from the Persian king the recognition of the Nestorian views as those of orthodox Christianity, and the expulsion from his dominions of those Christians who refused to accept them. The Nestorian party was thus confirmed in possession of the ecclesiastical establishment of Persia, which they have retained ever since. Barsumas established a famous school at Nisibis, which became a great centre of missionary work throughout the East. In the sixth and seventh

centuries this great Church could count up its twenty-five metropolitans, or archbishops. Those who dwelt nearest to Bagdad met the Catholicos in yearly synod; those furthest off sent their confession of faith to him every sixth year. The prosperity of this Eastern Church culminated in the beginning of the eleventh century. It may be doubted whether Innocent III. possessed more spiritual power or counted a larger number of spiritual subjects than the patriarch of the city of the caliph. Northward they followed the track of the wandering Tartar tribes through the valleys of the Imaus, and across the steppes of Central Asia. Some of them even penetrated into China, where a bilingual inscription, Chinese and Syriac, purporting to be of date 781,* relates that a Nestorian missionary laboured there with success as far back as the year 635. Another Nestorian mission entered China by Canton, and laboured successfully for a considerable period. Timotheus, one of their most distinguished patriarchs, sent forth in the ninth century from the monastery of Bethabe, in Mesopotamia, hosts of missionaries, who roved in the neighbourhood of the Caspian. The Nestorian schools, especially those of Bagdad, Edessa, Nisibis, and Dschondisapur, in Kusistan, "exercised a very marked influence on the geographical diffusion of knowledge,"† gave the first impulse to scientific and medical investigations, and scattered the seeds of civilisation far into the distant East.

The Christians of St. Thomas on the coast of Malabar are a still existing monument of the missionary labours of the Eastern Church in India and Ceylon. This remarkable outlying fragment of Christendom attracted the notice of our King Alfred in the tenth century; in the sixteenth century the Portuguese were astonished by its discovery. It was in reaction from the Portuguese missionaries that

* Now generally admitted to be genuine.

† Humboldt's "Cosmos," ii. 578 (Bohn's Ed.).

these Christians of St. Thomas finally exchanged their Nestorianism for the Monophysitism of Syria.

The curious legends current in the West, some time after the twelfth century, of the kingdom of Prester John are founded on another of these successful Nestorian missions. The story is this. The Nestorian metropolitan Ebedjesu, Bishop of Maru, in Chorasan, in Persia, in a letter to his Patriarch Maris, relates that a king of Kerait, in the beginning of the eleventh century, had been converted to Christianity by means of Christian merchants, certainly Nestorians. The prince, it is said, thereupon sent a request to the metropolitan that he would either come to him personally or else send a priest to baptize him. The patriarch is said to have empowered Ebedjesu to send to that country two priests, together with deacons, and ecclesiastical vessels. Two hundred thousand people of the nation are said to have embraced Christianity, and the king was ordained priest; and receiving the baptismal name of John, was called Presbyter (Prester) John, and his successors in the kingdom were also ordained priests and bore the dynastic name of John. Exaggerated stories respecting the power of these princes and the extent of their empire were current in the West in the thirteenth century. Neander says that the report of the Nestorian metropolitan is confirmed in all essential points by the narratives of Western missionaries and travellers, who were not accustomed to exaggerate; and that we may regard the main story of the conversion of the Princes of Kerait, a kingdom of Tartary situated north of China, as a fact sufficiently well established, however uncertain the rest of the story may be.*

Under the Caliphs of Bagdad the skill and learning of the Nestorians frequently secured their appointment to the most important offices both in the cabinet of the sovereign and in the provinces.

* Neander's "Church History," vii. 62 (Bohn's Ed.).

“The caliphs had extended a liberal toleration and protection to all their Christian subjects, but when their power was superseded by that of a Tartar race of sovereigns, a new fanatical and barbarous policy was adopted throughout their dominions.” The first great persecution of the Chaldeans (Nestorians) appears to have taken place during the reign of Kassan, the son of Arghoun, the grandson of Hulaka. But it is to the conquests of Tamerlane that the ruin of the Christians of these countries is especially to be attributed. In his Mohammedan zeal he persecuted them without mercy, destroyed their churches, and put themselves to the sword. I follow Mr. Layard and Dr. Badger in thinking it probable that it was at this time, *i.e.*, in the middle of the fourteenth century, that the Christians of the plains fled for refuge to the inaccessible fastnesses of the mountains of Koordistan.

In the middle of the sixteenth century an unhappy schism took place, which has divided the people into two hostile parties ever since. For a hundred years before that date it had been the law and custom that the patriarch should nominate his successor during his lifetime from among his nearest relatives, a nephew being usually selected. But in 1552, on the death of the patriarch of the day, some of the bishops assembled at Mosul set aside the claims of the patriarch-designate, and elected another, Sutâka, to the vacant seat. The mountain Nestorians and the Nestorians of Oroomiah, making together two-thirds of the people, adhered to the regular succession; the people about Mosul gave their allegiance to his rival. The method of hereditary succession to the Nestorian sees may or may not be a desirable mode of nominating bishops; the same doubt may be raised as to the present mode of electing a pope, or of nominating English bishops; but in any case a change in the mode should be effected by the regular action of the Church. The rival line of Mosul patriarchs raised a strong presumption against its

own legitimacy by its own act, when it proceeded at once to abandon its ancient independence and put itself under the obedience of the Roman see. This line was, however, recognised by the Turkish Government. The Mosul branch have taken to themselves the name of the Chaldean Church. The Kochanes branch are commonly known by the name of Nestorians.

The Mosul patriarchs have outlying bodies, under metropolitans, at Diarbekr, Seert, and Salmast, and a few adherents under a bishop at Oroomiah. The Chaldean bishops, it will be remembered, formed a notable group in the procession of bishops who walked through St. Peter's on the occasion of the promulgation of the dogma of the immaculate conception. But the Chaldean Church has always submitted uneasily to the rule of Rome, and has obstinately refused to abandon its own customs. The present patriarch refused to receive the dogma of the infallibility, and has persisted in his refusal, and confusion reigns among the Chaldeans.* The Nestorians still adhere to their ancient doctrines and customs.

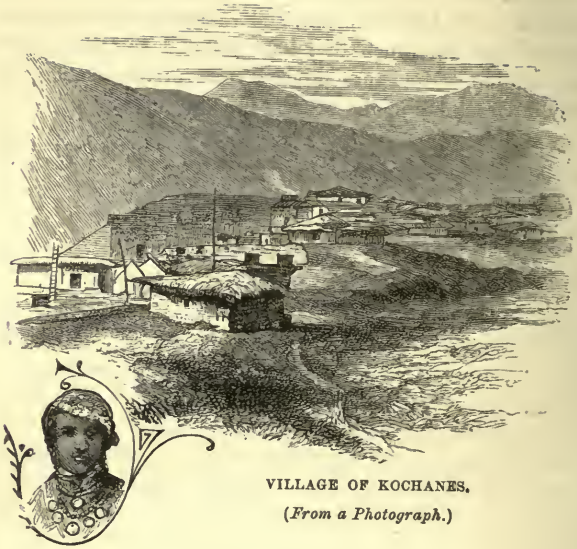
The Nestorians, again, are in two sections : the tribes who inhabit the mountains of Koordistan, who are under Turkish rule ; and the people who live in the plain of Oroomiah, in the dominions of the Persian Shah. The

* The *Univers* publishes an Encyclical, addressed by the pope to the bishops, clergy, and faithful of the Chaldean rite of the patriarchate of Babylon. It details the offences of Joseph Audu, whose election as Chaldean Patriarch was confirmed in 1848, and who has almost ever since shown an insubordinate spirit. He is charged with fomenting disaffection in Malabar against the Latin bishops and missionaries, with long refusing to consecrate two bishops selected by the pope from a list which he had submitted to him ; with delaying his submission to the decrees of the last Council ; with submitting eventually only with the reservation of his rights and privileges ; and with sacrilegiously consecrating bishops not approved by the pope. The pope threatens to excommunicate these usurping bishops if they do not immediately retire, and to excommunicate the patriarch also if by submission he does not avert such a stigma on his age and rank.—*John Bull*, Feb. 10, 1877.

two sections of the people differ in appearance, costume, and character, but they agree in all religious questions, in obedience to Mar Shimoon, and in strong attachment to the religion for which they have suffered so many ages of persecution. Kochanes is the centre of one section, the city of Oroomiah of the other. *

* The numbers of the people are estimated by the American missionaries at Oroomiah at—

Mountaineers.....	56,000
Oroomians	25,000
	81,000
Chaldeans.....	36,000
Making a total of.....	117,000



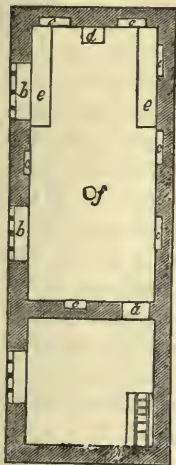
VILLAGE OF KOCHANES.
(From a Photograph.)

CHAPTER XVI.

KOCHANES.

THE house which had been assigned to us was that of a cousin of the patriarch, which happened to be disengaged. Beside it, with only a passage between, was that of the patriarch's father. Ours was substantially built of rough stones and mortar, with the usual flat roof. We entered the one door into a room with roughly-paved stone floor and bare walls, and no furniture ; on the opposite side was a rude ladder leading to the upper story. Another room on the ground floor, on the left of the entrance, was locked, and probably contained things belonging to the absent owner. The ladder gave access to a small ante-room on the first floor, lighted by one large, unframed, unglazed opening,

which made a kind of balcony. A door led out of this into the one living room ; pains had evidently been taken to furnish it comfortably for our use.



PLAN OF APARTMENT
AT KOCHANES.

The accompanying plan will help us to describe it: *a* is the door from the anteroom ; it is lighted by two windows, *b b*, square openings under arched heads, divided into small panes by strong wooden cross bars, but unglazed ; in winter the framework is covered with oiled paper. *c c* are arched niches in the thickness of the wall, with a wooden shelf across, which serve for cupboards ; they remind one of the openings in our old English church walls, which served for piscina and ambry. *d* is the hearth, with a chimney projecting over it, like twelfth or thirteenth century designs in England.

The roof is carried on numerous massive poles for rafters, across which are placed stout sticks, then lath and plaster, and above all a thick layer of hard-beaten earth. The furniture of the room consisted of Koord rugs laid on the floor for carpets, two divans (couches), *e e*, also made gay with rug coverings, and a tall, massive brass candlestick, with a thick candle placed in the middle of the floor at *f*.

We had so long been accustomed to sleeping under canvas that we shrank from sleeping within four walls ; accordingly we had our tent pitched, and slept in it for the first night ; then we found that people were made a little uneasy by it, and for the rest of the visit we slept on the divans in our room.

Next morning we sent to ask his Holiness for an interview to present the Archbishop's letter and pay our respects. Presently a servant came to conduct us. We entered

through an arched doorway into a porch, whose pavement was the living rock ; next into a passage whose pavement of rock was eked out in places with large rough stones ; this was so dark that the servant took me by the hand to guide me. A door on the left hand of the passage admitted us into a small dark ante-chamber, and thence we passed into the screens of the hall. We take off our shoes at the door and enter the room ; the patriarch, with some of his relations, meets us at the door, and conducts us to our seat. Our servants have followed with a present displayed on a large round metal tray, which they place on the ground before the patriarch. We deliver our letter, which is translated by our interpreter, and state our errand, which is to assure the patriarch of the interest and sympathy of the Archbishop ; and, in reply to requests for the help of the Church of England, to ask for some definite plan in which England might render assistance in improving and extending the education of the Nestorian people. The patriarch expresses in earnest words his pleasure and thankfulness ; charges me to write at once to the Archbishop and convey his words ; states that he will summon the chief men of the nation to consult on the subject named in the letter, and then will himself write to the Archbishop. Pipes are brought ; coffee is handed round ; a little general conversation ensues ; and in about half an hour we take our leave, and stroll into the valley to look about us.

The mountains here form a deep valley, whose upper end is half filled in by a table-land ; the ravines run round the two sides of this table-land, with their torrents, the confluence of fifty smaller torrents fed by fifty snow-drifts on the mountain sides. These two torrents unite their streams at the foot of this table-land, and the resultant river runs eastward down the valley to swell the waters of the Zab. The table-land affords room for the village and fields of Kochanes. The two sides of the valley are steep and lofty hill-sides ; the hill on the south is called Tirsha,

that on the north Saidha ; the head of the valley is closed in by the mountains, Tgella and Birtgella, over which we passed on our way hither. Looking down the valley the view is closed by a range of snowy mountains.

The village consists of the cluster of rude one-story buildings, with a two-story tower of defence in the middle, which form the patriarchal house ; three or four houses like that in which we are quartered belonging to relations of the patriarch ; and about a dozen huts of the peasantry ; with a small water-mill at a little distance. The church is built upon one of a group of rocks a little below the village, and a group of fine well-grown trees shades the north side of the church, and there is a considerable grove a little further north. We lounged down to the churchyard trees, and sat under the shadow of their foliage, the irrigating channels flowing past our feet and adding to the coolness and charm of the place. A few of the people joined us, sat round in a circle, lighted their pipes, and carried on an interesting conversation. It was a delightful rest after our toils, which had really been considerable, instead of travelling over a brown, treeless desert, under a burning sun, to be lounging under broad spreading trees, with a pleasant breeze from the snow mountains, and the murmur of flowing water in our ears, with a chibook of the finest Turkish tobacco to help the drowsy charm. There was a mental repose, too, in the consciousness of having reached the object of our journey, and a deep sense of gratitude to God who had brought us so long a journey, through so many dangers, without a single personal accident. W., not yet strong after his last attack of fever, lay on the ground ; one of the servants ran to fetch him a mattress and pillow ; presently he fell asleep, and our visitors quietly took their leave ; the servant broke off a bough from the tree and fanned the sleeper until he, too, nodded over his voluntary task.

For the first few days our life was very quiet, but the

novelty of everything about us gave us ample occupation. We soon fell into routine habits. We did not rise so early as the people, because we did not fall into the habit of taking a siesta in the middle of the day. I fear they must have taken us for very lazy people, for the patriarch had said prayers at dawn, and breakfasted, and got through a day's affairs before we were stirring. Here is a day's proceedings: rise about six. No tub to be had, so adjourn to the ante-room and call Sliemôn, who brings his brass basin and ewer, and pours water for us to wash; I finish by bidding him pour it over my head. Sliemôn is the chartered joker of the patriarchal court, so he plays the practical joke of pouring on, notwithstanding my cries of "Bassa! bassa!" ("Enough! enough!") until his ewer is empty. Then comes breakfast. Enter first the patriarch's major-domo, an elderly man, Picho (*ch. hard*) by name, who has taken a liking to us, and performs his functions with affectionate *empressement*. After him a strapping young fellow, who is a kind of henchman of the patriarch; he brings in the breakfast on a great round white metal tray which he places on the floor. The major-domo spreads the cloth (a compliment to our European habits), then places the leaves of native bread round the margin of the table, after the native fashion, to form tablecloth and napkin. Then the dishes are placed on the table. What are they? A great bowl of pillaff, *i.e.*, rice boiled as if for a curry; another bowl of balls of spiced pillaff wrapped up in green leaves, boiled eggs, yohoort, *i.e.*, sour milk, butter in pretty little balls, honey, the skim off the great bowl of boiled milk, and snow-cooled water.

Breakfast finished, enter another member of the patriarchal household as important as the major-domo—the officer who presides over the coffee; I should liken him to the butler; a short, middle-aged man, Mirza by name, handsomely dressed in crimson, with the dignified courtesy

and admirable "drill" of the official of a great house. He is followed by another henchman, who carries the tray containing the coffee service. It is not etiquette to take more than one cup, but the Turkish cups are so small and the coffee is so super-excellent that we should like another; this he observes with tact, and, with amiable condescension to our foreign training, gives us another, and makes us feel rather ashamed by suggesting a third cup.

Breakfast over and the table cleared, a servant comes to announce a visit from his Holiness. We go to the door to receive him. He puts off his shoes at the door, salutes us by touching his forehead, and asks after our well-being. We conduct him to his place on the divan. He is generally accompanied by several of his family: his father Benjamin, whom we instal on the other divan; two of his cousins, Shamasha Johannan and Shamasha Yona; sometimes his uncle Nathan; whom we seat, uncomfortably, I fear, on our camp chairs; two or three servants follow. All being seated, the servants hand pipes; it is a very necessary part of the ceremonial of a visit, and is done with a good deal of etiquette. The servant fills and lights the pipe, and smokes it until it is fairly lighted; then he approaches with measured steps, places the bowl on the ground, measuring his distance judiciously, then with a radial motion presents the stem, at the same time making a low bow and placing his hand upon his breast. It is a compliment, equivalent to our old fashion of taking wine with a man at dinner, to smoke a few whiffs and then present the pipe to some one of the company who is not smoking. The pipes are hardly fairly under way when the chief butler enters again with his henchman and pours out coffee for the whole company. It is supposed that the coffee and the pipes and the servants are all ours, and that we are entertaining our guests. After half an hour's conversation, always be it understood, through an interpreter, the patriarch rises; we conduct him to the door.

where he and his company put on their shoes again, and we bow them down the ladder which forms our grand staircase, and amuse them by taking leave in Syriac—*awal bassema*. The combination of rude house and furnishing, with a little court, and a numerous attendance, and a ceremonious etiquette, help us to realise the life of our barons in the feudal ages.

It is most curious of all, perhaps, to find the mediæval jester still in existence here. Sliemôn (= Solomon !) fulfils all the functions of the office, except that he does not wear any distinctive badge of office. He is by no means wanting in sense, but he says and does, and is permitted to say and do, the most eccentric things, and every one has a joke, verbal or practical, for Sliemôn, and Sliemôn is not backward with his jokes, verbal and practical, in return. He takes liberties with everybody. One evening he had gone to the house of one of the greatest men in the nation and fell asleep over the hearth. The people for a joke locked the doors, went to bed, and left him there asleep. In the middle of the night he woke up cold, saw the joke which had been played upon him, and proceeded to improve upon it. He went to the bedroom of the great man, tickled him in the side till he moved, and repeated the trick till he finally moved off his mattress upon the floor ; then Sliemôn got into his warm bed and pulled the rug over him and went comfortably to sleep. But presently the great man woke with the cold, sat up and found himself out of bed and some one snoring in his place. On pushing the intruder he recognised Sliemôn's voice, so with one or two good-humoured boxes on the ears he turned him out to find himself a bed elsewhere. We heard a score of his strange pranks, and he was the standing amusement of the patriarchal court.

Then we read or write, or otherwise occupy ourselves for an hour or so, by which time the temperature of the room is growing hot, and we adjourn to the shade of the ever-

pleasant grove of trees by the church. Somebody is sure to join us here, and, if we can get hold of the interpreter, we chat with them till about two, when we return home for a meal, which may be called luncheon or dinner. Bowls of pillaff, plain or spiced, bowls of yohoort, a bowl of broth, with shapeless pieces of mutton floating in it, are the native dishes ; but here our own Armenian cook comes to our assistance, and has usually a fowl or a couple of skewers of kabobs for us, and a sweet dish of some kind to follow. We always have the luxury of iced water to drink. After dinner pipes and coffee, with the usual etiquette ; then perhaps we call to Sliemôn, who is always in attendance in the ante-chamber, to fill the pipes again, and we lounge on the divans and chat. About five, evening prayers in church ; the patriarch sometimes sends us word that he is going to prayers, and we dutifully obey his intimation. We soon find out that the etiquette of the court is that after morning prayers those who are supposed to have the *entrée* return with the patriarch to his house, and pipes and coffee are served, and there is half an hour's conversation. After evening prayers everybody is at liberty to attend the *levée*. We are punctual in our attendance. We put off our shoes at the door ; that is to say, we English made a compromise, we wore dress shoes, and wore india rubber shoes over them, and we put off our overshoes at the door. The patriarch takes his seat, with his legs tucked under him, on his divan ; he motions me to an arm-chair placed beside him at the upper end of the room ; he beckons the junior member of the commission, to whom he is paternally kind, to a seat beside him on the divan ; the rest squat round the four sides of the room on the rugs on the floor. Sometimes the patriarch's father comes in a little late, and the etiquette is for every one to rise till he has taken his seat ; the venerable old gentleman begs us, with pleasant *bonhomie*, not to disturb ourselves, but it would be a grave breach of politeness not to do it.

Then come the pipes and coffee, with the usual ceremonial. We talk about things English and Nestorian, and Koordish and Turkish ; with all the etiquette there is an utter absence of *gêne* ; everybody who has anything to say says it, and anything interesting is translated for the benefit of the other party. After half an hour or so we ask his Holiness if he will please to dismiss us ; I never quite knew before what the phrase to take your leave meant—it means to ask and take this permission to depart. Sometimes when we asked leave the patriarch would ask in reply if we were tired, to which of course we replied that we were only fearful of tiring him, and remained till another lull in the conversation.

The day has now grown cool again, and we take a constitutional down the hill-side on the north, through trees and brushwood, to the mountain stream at the bottom, and then climb back by another route. The walk might not be quite safe in winter, for the bears from the Gelu mountains come down thus far when the snows drive them into the valleys. Or another evening we accompany the sportsmen to the stream, on the other side of the valley to sit for an hour, and watch for a rifle-shot at the wild goats as they come down from the mountain on that side to drink. Or another evening we go down the valley till we arrive at the point where we can see the two streams meet down below to continue their tumultuous course towards the Zab. "Take care !" says our companion, "there is a large snake somewhere hereabouts." "How large ?" "Oh ! as thick as a man's leg !" We manage to get home before the short twilight has quite died out of the heavens, and in time for supper, which is a repetition of dinner ; then the divans are, chiefly by the addition of our own pillows, converted into beds, and we usually adopt the early habits of the country and betake ourselves to sleep.

We have the pleasure to give a portrait of Benjamin, and of Isa, his son by a second wife. The latter is a bright,

handsome boy, with complexion as dark as a Spaniard, and large fine dark eyes ; his father has dressed him in "a coat of many colours," white full trousers, gay silk vest, whose ground colour is gold, a scarlet jacket, and a hand-



PORTRAITS OF BENJAMIN, THE PATRIARCH'S FATHER, AND OF ISA
(PRONOUNCED KSHA = JOSHUA), BENJAMIN'S SON, AND THE
PATRIARCH'S HALF-BROTHER,

(From a Photograph.)

some fez with a very long tassel. The group might serve as a model for a picture of Jacob and Joseph.

About the third evening we had a second visit from the patriarch after supper. He feared we might be *ennuyés*

and had come to spend an hour with us. After a couple of games at chess, in which I was beaten, I introduced a conversation about the amusements of the people in the long winter evenings. I found they, like other Easterns, were fond of story-telling; and I induced those present to tell me some of the popular stories. I give them here, not because they are very good stories, but because the popular stories of a people help to admit us into the mind of a people; and I give them not as the stories in which the upper classes of the Nestorians, who recited them to me, found pleasure, but those with which a lower class of the people amuse themselves over the hearth on a winter's evening. The first is, "The Harm a Hatchet did":—

Three men went one winter day to cut boughs for the sheep. One climbed up into a tree and began to hack away, when he clumsily cut his hand. He threw the hatchet down and it unfortunately hit one of his two companions, who in his anger flung it away from him and wounded the third. They all returned bleeding to the village and told their story. The villagers, hearing the story, decided that the hatchet was mad, and held a consultation what should be done with it. They resolved to burn it, and so put it out of the way of doing further mischief. When it was hot they began to beat it, when one stroke made it cast out sparks and at the same time jump out of the fire. They concluded that it was still alive, the fire could not kill it; what could be done to get rid of the dangerous creature? Some one suggested to hang it. So they put a rope round it and hung it up to a beam in the straw shed. But being still hot it burnt through the rope, fell on the straw, and set fire to the shed; the flames spread and burnt down the village. The people left their burning houses and ran away. Next day one of them went to look at the village, and saw a cat sitting on the roof of one of the ruined houses washing its face; the man thought it was making the usual gesture in taking an oath. He went back and

reported that the hatchet had turned into a cat; and that he saw it swear that no one should hereafter inhabit that village. So the people forsook the village, and it remains a ruin to this day.

This has some resemblance to the stories of the wise men of Gotham in Notts, and the equally wise men of Coggeshall, in Essex, in our own folk lore. The next story I think I remember to have seen somewhere before (perhaps in the "Arabian Nights").

A man was leading his donkey to Mosul. Three Koords overtook him, and one proposed that they should steal the donkey. But how? Another of the Koords suggested a plan, which he proceeded to put into execution. He took the bridle carefully off the donkey's head and put it on the head of one of his companions, and led the donkey away. When the man reached the bazaar, all the people wondered, and asked why he was leading a man so by a bridle. He turned and saw the man, and exclaimed, "Where's my donkey?"

The man whom he was leading replied, "I was your donkey. Twenty years ago a wicked enchanter turned me into a donkey, but coming into Mosul has broken the spell and I am a man again."

The Koord, who was a fine big fellow, assumed a threatening air, "What have you to say in excuse for working me so hard and beating me so much all these years?"

The man humbly apologised, and said he did not know that he was a man or he should have treated him differently.

"But you must give me some compensation for all this ill-treatment."

"I am a poor man, and have only got five beshliks."

"Well, give me them and I will forgive you."

So the Koords got both the man's donkey and his money.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE NESTORIAN PEOPLE.

AFTER we had been at Kochanes a few days the plot thickened, at least more actors came upon the scene. We were watching one afternoon a number of ant-like figures (at least they looked about that size) crawling down a zig-zag line on the steep hill to the south, when some one told us that it was Mar Serghees, the Bishop of Gelu, with his people, coming from his village up in the Gelu mountains. He was the harbinger of many followers. We learnt by the results that the patriarch had sent messengers all over the Nestorian country, even to the distant plains of Persia, bidding bishops and priests, and maleks and reises, to come to Kochanes to welcome the messengers of the Archbishop of the English Church, and to consult what answer should be returned to his letters. Every day they came, every one with his attendants; every bishop, with two exceptions, came; scores of priests; every tribe sent its chief, with half a dozen to a score or more of his principal men. Some only stayed a night and returned, for it was a busy time with their pastoral and agricultural work; some stayed a few days, some important persons a still longer time.

Two of the arrivals were attended with a public ceremonial. Soon after breakfast (July 20th) they came to tell us that the mattran was coming up the valley. The mattran, or metropolitan, is the person next in dignity to the patriarch, and I guessed from the announcement that it was proper that I should take part in his reception. I

went out at once. Some of the people were already marching off down the valley. I saw Benjamin (the patriarch's father) and others sitting under the shade of one of the houses, and guessed that my place was with them. The patriarch did not come out; he came out to welcome the Archbishop of Canterbury's representatives, but it was not etiquette to come out to meet his own suffragans. I gathered that there is a written code of ceremonial which is carefully followed. After half an hour of expectation, we saw a long procession of men winding up the path by the stream on the north side of the valley; in the middle of the procession one man on horseback, who was of course the mattran, presently two other horsemen came in sight, who were his two suffragan bishops. They dismounted and walked towards us, who had formed into a group to welcome them. I was introduced to the mattran and kissed hands, to which he replied with the courtesy of kissing his own hand at the same time. Then Benjamin intimated that I was to go to my own house to be prepared to receive a formal visit, after the new comers had paid their respects to the patriarch. Soon after, however, Mar Serghees came to say that the mattran and his companions were all tired with their journey and begged to defer their visit till afternoon, and Mar Serghees sought to make the time pass pleasantly by volunteering a game at chess.

After dinner a number of men came pouring into my room, filling the lower part of it, sent by the patriarch to tell me their tale with their own lips. They were Nestorians, men of Hozé, near Wan. The previous afternoon, July 19th, about 150 of Ali Khan's men, headed by his son Mammé, had come upon them, carried off their cattle, 1,050 sheep, 200 oxen, 12 buffaloes, 7 horses, 4 plough chains, and stripped and carried off the clothing of the twenty-two men who were with the cattle. Ali Agha is a Koordish chief we were warned against at Wan; his

horsemen make frequent incursions into the country round about, and we were fortunate that it was not we who were robbed and stripped by them. Ali Agha is like one of the old Border chieftains of our own country. A man of good blood, the head of a powerful tribe, with lands and flocks and herds, hospitable and kindly at home, maintaining a good position in society, who adds to his means and exercises his followers in these raids on the property of his neighbours. Being a Persian subject, he sends his horsemen across the border into these ill-governed, ill-protected Turkish districts, and they retire with their booty into Persia, and laugh at pursuit. This, for example, was a dashing and successful exploit, and the gallant riders went off I daresay careering their horses round and round after their Persian fashion and laughing over the fun of it. And the old Agha I daresay smiled on Mammé, and told him he was a fine fellow, and would maintain the honour of the family. I was greatly interested in this illustration of the border life of England and Scotland 300 years ago, and could enter into all the dash and romance of the affair; but I had the reverse of the medal before me in these poor ruined villagers appealing to heaven and the Englishman for help against the spoiler. I made them write out a schedule of their losses, and, Mar Shimoon also desiring it, I wrote to the British Consul at Tabriz, asking him to try to get these poor fellows some redress. If I had my way I would give that gallant fellow Ali Agha fair warning, for the sake of the old customs which he has inherited, and if he did not profit by the warning, I would give him a short shrift and a long rope, by way of inaugurating a new reign of peace and security on this unsettled border.

While these Hozé men were still with me a servant came to announce that the patriarch, the mattran, and the bishops were coming to pay their formal visit, and the poor fellows were rather summarily dismissed.

The Mattran is a man past the middle age, short and broadly built ; he seemed to me to be an earnest, thoughtful, cautious person. He was treated with a good deal of ceremonious consideration. One of his bishops was a very young man, I should think not more than about five-and-twenty. The conversation turned on our mission ; it took a religious turn, and I was struck with the abundance of scriptural allusion, which showed a familiarity with the Bible. The mattran compared the coming of Englishmen to them to the mission of Moses to deliver God's people from the oppressions of Egypt. I took occasion, while deprecating so exalted a comparison, to point out that the immediate result of Moses' interference was an increase of suffering to the Israelites, that the people had to endure great hardships in working out their deliverance, and that it was only their children who actually entered the promised land ; and tried thereupon to moderate what seemed to me a tendency to over-sanguine expectation of the immediate and great results which English help would bring. After a short conversation the patriarch rose, and we bowed our visitors down-stairs.

As we came out of church after evening prayers we saw another large company filing through the trees along the path by the stream. Some of our Kochanes men had gone to meet them, others stood on the knoll outside the patriarch's house and fired shots of welcome, which were answered by the approaching party. We saw at once by the Persian hats which many of the new-comers wore that they were the Oroomiah men. Our company returning from church to the patriarch's house met the new-comers on their way to the same point ; there ensued a great deal of hearty welcoming, with embracing and kissing after the Eastern fashion ; then we all passed on and filled the patriarch's reception-room. After the first burst of conversation the Oroomiah bishop told us some of their adventures. The Serparast, *i.e.*, the official who is

appointed by the Shah as governor of the Christians of the district and protector of their interests, had forbidden them to come to Kochanes, threatening to fine and imprison any who should disobey him. "Why?" we asked. Whereupon we were told—what I do not vouch for—that the Serparast was appointed quite recently through an intrigue of the Papist party in Oroomiah, and that it was the padri* who had induced the governor to hinder this great gathering of the Nestorians at their national centre, and to keep those of them over whom he had control from direct communication with the Englishmen. They did not know that we had resolved to visit the Persian Nestorians in their own country. The bishop, however, had defied the governor's threats; a number of the priests got out of the town secretly, others came with less difficulty from their villages, and they made up a considerable company, who had come—the major part of them on foot—a journey of three days across a wild and dangerous country in obedience to the summons of their patriarch. After some speeches on both sides on the subject of our mission we took our leave.

Our time was very fully and very pleasantly occupied in making the acquaintance of the people. There were constantly fresh arrivals, who all paid us a formal visit first; and many of them again and again, in our own room or under the shade of the church trees, took opportunities of coming to talk to us. Mar Shimoon's people calculated that about a thousand of the Nestorians had responded to his summons, and paid their respects to him and to us. Now a score of the Tyari men, with their chiefs and priests, filled our room; presently it was a like number of the Tehoma tribe; next perhaps a couple of priests came to ask some questions about the English Church, or about what steps it was proposed to take with respect to their own Church; we, on the other hand, sought

* The Romish priests

repeated interviews with the more important people. If we strolled out in the heat of the day to rest under the church trees, a group soon surrounded us for informal gossip, for which we were as anxious as they. After the Oroomiah men arrived there was no difficulty in finding an



THE PATRIARCH, MAR SHIMON.

(From a Photograph.)

interpreter; several of them had learnt more or less of English from the American missionaries, and we picked up a good deal of information. This concourse of the people afforded us very great advantages; it brought us into intimate communication with nearly all the chief people

of the nation, without our having to travel from tribe to tribe to seek them, a journey we were glad to be spared, for the climate of the deep mountain valleys in the height of summer is as trying and dangerous as travelling in the Mesopotamian plains.

The valley was lively with them all day long. I ought not to omit to say that they were all the patriarch's guests. I incidentally heard that they were consuming half a dozen sheep a day; how many hundredweights of pillaff, and how many pounds of tobacco were also expended from the patriarchal storehouses I cannot even guess. To put them up at night was the easiest part of it. Eight or ten slept on Benjamin's housetop, which was just under our windows. I suppose every other housetop in the village was equally crowded. In walking about after dusk one stumbled over men sleeping here and there on the ground. It reminded me of the way in which Angus M'Aulay disposed of the clansmen who mustered at his castle:

"Old Donald hastily rushed into the apartment. 'A message from Vich Alister More; he is coming up in the evening.'

"'With how many attendants?' said M'Aulay.

"'Some five-and-twenty or thirty,' said Donald, 'his ordinary retinue.'

"'Shake down plenty of straw in the great barn,' said the laird.

"Another servant here stumbled hastily in, announcing the expected approach of Sir Hector M'Lean, 'who is arriving with a large following.'

"'Put them in the malt-kiln,' said M'Aulay, 'and keep the breadth of the middenstead between them and the M'Donalds—they are but unfriends to each other.'

"Donald now re-entered, his visage considerably lengthened. 'The teil's i' the folk,' he said; 'the haille Hielands are asteen, I think. Evan Dhu of

Lochiel will be here in an hour, with Lord kens how many gillies.'

" 'Into the great barn with them beside the M'Donalds,' said the laird.

" More and more chiefs were announced, the least of whom would have counted it derogatory to his dignity to stir without a retinue of six or seven persons. To every new annunciation Angus M'Aulay answered by naming some place of accommodation—the stables, the byre, the loft, the sheds, every domestic office was destined for the night to some hospitable purpose or other. At length the arrival of M'Dougal of Lorn, after all his means of accommodation were exhausted, reduced him to some perplexity. 'What is to be done, Donald?' said he. . . .

" 'What needs all this?' said Allan, starting up and coming forward with the stern abruptness of his usual manner. 'Are the Gaels of to-day of softer flesh or whiter blood than their fathers were? Knock the head out of a cask of usquebae; let that be their night-gear, their plaids their bed-clothes, the blue sky their canopy, and the heather their couch. Come a thousand more, they would not quarrel on the broad heath for want of room.' "

And what kind of men were these Nestorians? Physically, fine athletic fellows, with a good physiognomy, picturesquely dressed in the style shown in our photographs, which, however, fail to give the gay colours of trousers and vest, waist-shawl, jacket, and turban, which had much to do with the picturesque effect. The costume consists of very loose trousers gathered in at the ankle, of the gayest colours and most showy patterns; *e.g.*, a pattern which seemed to be a favourite with the young men was crimson, with broad longitudinal stripes formed of two lines of light yellow, with a zig-zag pattern between them; a vest of some showy material; a shawl wound round the waist; a short sleeved jacket over all. On the head is worn a tall conical

cap of white felt, sometimes worn alone, but more commonly wound round by a couple of small shawls of different colours, with an end of each hanging down behind. The mountain fashion is for men to shave the head, leaving a few long locks behind, which are often plaited into two "pigtails"; since the turban is worn indoors and out this peculiarity, which to our eyes does not improve the appearance of the men, is not seen; they all wear the moustache, and many also the beard. There are some fine faces among them. They are well-armed, every man with a "hanjiar"—a large dagger with a curved blade and large handle—stuck in his shawl; many of them with scimitar accompanied by a small round shield hung at their backs, made of leather, strengthened with iron, with the front covered with embroidery, and a central spike surrounded by a long red fringe and particoloured tassels; some with rifle also, involving cross-belts for powder-horn and ball-pouch. A finely made man, fully equipped, was a very picturesque person, and we had the pleasure of seeing such men by the score.

Intellectually quick, bright, intelligent, but with no book learning at all. With the mixture of self-respect and manly courtesy which mountain tribes-men seem usually to possess, they are in manners, gentlemen. Morally brave, irascible, honest, affectionate, generous, chaste, a little subtle, and not always truthful. On the whole a fine set of fellows, well worthy of the interest and help of their English co-religionists. With some of them we became on terms of real friendship.

Of course they were the upper class of the people with whom we thus became acquainted, and we saw them at their best. But we took advantage of our opportunities to study the lower class of the people also. Very poor many of them, but the poverty of the mountains, not the degrading poverty of cities. Ill-lodged and ill-clad many

of them. Look at that little fellow, one of a group which stands to watch us as we take our evening walk ; his sole clothing is what once was a shirt, but is now a rag, which hangs down his back only, and is, I suppose, a token that his mother knows he ought to wear clothes—if he had them ; the costume is pleasant enough this weather, but I hope he has a lambskin coat to put on when winter comes.

The people were glad to have their portraits taken, and we secured quite a gallery of all the notables of the Nestorian nation. Some of them our readers will be glad to see as examples of their physiognomy and costume.

First, as is due, we present our readers to his Holiness the Patriarch. Unfortunately our photographic plates were not all equally successful ; some partially, some wholly failed, and the patriarch's portraits, although we took the precaution to take two sittings, are among our failures. The engraving (p. 193), therefore, can only be trusted for the costume and general appearance of his Holiness, but not as an accurate representation of his features. He is seated on his heels, after his usual fashion, in his divan.

We have already given Benjamin, the patriarch's father ; here is a portrait of Nathan, the patriarch's uncle, and father of Kaiser, the patriarch designate.

Our next picture (*see* Frontispiece) is a group of the Tyari men, who came as a deputation from their tribe to pay their respects to the Archbishop of Canterbury's envoy. The two chiefs are in the middle of the front row. The man in the white coat and very tall turban is Malek Daniel ; on his right, conspicuous from the ivory-handled hanjiar stuck in his girdle, is his co-chief, Malek Gonri. On Malek Daniel's left is a priest who celebrated Holy Communion in Kochanes church on the first Sunday of our visit ; on his left, and at the extremity of the line, is Rabban Yonna, of whom we shall

give another portrait when we shall have occasion presently to describe his remarkable character and position. The man standing up between the two Maleks is a priest with a fine physiognomy. Of the rest I have a memorandum



NATHAN, THE PATRIARCH'S UNCLE.
(From a Photograph.)

of the names, but I fear they would not interest the reader.

With much diffidence I put before the reader portraits of some of the ladies of the patriarchal household. The ladies here maintain a certain amount of the reserve of

Eastern women. They go about the village unveiled ; but they never appear at meals or receptions. We were not introduced to any of them. W. on one occasion was dressed up in Nestorian costume, and was carried off into the penetralia of the patriarch's house to show his sister, Madame Sultie, what a fine young Nestorian he made ;



TWO NESTORIAN LADIES.

(From a Photograph.)

but I was never admitted to any such privilege. It was only with much persuasion that we induced some of them to allow their portraits to be taken. As we pleaded that we desired to show English ladies what Nestorian ladies were like, we venture to think ourselves at liberty to present their portraits here.

Of the two ladies in the present picture, the elder lady on the left is Hami, the wife of Benjamin, and mother of Isa. The younger lady, Gerusha, is a very pretty lady, whose beauty was the cause of some adventures in her youth in escaping from the clutches of a Turkish neighbour ; she is now the wife of Shamasha Johannan, the son of Nathan.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE NESTORIAN HIERARCHY.

THE hierarchy of the Nestorian Church consists of—Mar Shimoon, Catholicus and Patriarch of the Eastern regions. “Mar* Shimoon” means the Lord Simon. All the Nestorian prelates have dynastic names, as the Pharaohs and the Cæsars, and, to come to Chaldea, the Abgaruses of Edessa had. Every patriarch is Mar Shimoon, the present being about the seventeenth of that name. “Catholicus” is the original title of this line of prelates, and is a memorial of the short time during which they were dependent on the See of Antioch, for, according to Dr. Neale, it means procurator-general of that see. They afterwards assumed the title, which rightly expressed the independent patriarchal power which they possessed. “The Eastern regions” means east of the limits of the Roman empire. The dignity is hereditary, that is to say, the possessor of the see selects a successor from among his near relations, a preference being given to his nephews. A successor is often selected at a very youthful age. From the time of his nomination he has to submit to the restrictions which are laid upon the bishops; he must not eat flesh, and he must not marry. The successor to the present patriarch is already nominated in the person of Kaiser, a son of Nathan, and nephew of the patriarch, a boy of about thirteen or fourteen. He is being educated, together with his cousin Isa, by a

* *Mar* means also saint; in the feminine, *Mart*, as *Mart Mariam*, Saint Mary.

private tutor ; but he does not appear, so far as we could see, to be treated with any special deference.

The ecclesiastical status of the patriarch seemed, so far as we could gather, to exceed that of a bishop who was regarded as simply the first among his brother bishops. He seemed to us to be regarded as, and to be, the autocratic ruler of the whole Nestorian Church.

The patriarch also wields the authority of a chieftain among the Nestorians, with the sanction of the Turkish authorities ; for example, during our brief residence there, we were witnesses of his decision of a civil case of disputed property, and of a criminal case of murder, which was tried by his delegate. The circumstances are worth detailing.

One morning a man came into our room to pay his respects, who began with " Good morning, sir," but we soon found that this was all the English he knew. He was a Greek, but looked more like a northern barbarian, with a great muscular frame, unkempt hair and beard, and a shaggy coat. His servant, an active, bold-looking fellow, was armed to the teeth, with a long rifle, a bell-mouthed pistol hung at his belt by a chain, and a dagger which deserves a special description : a blade about eighteen inches long, three broad, with a rib down the middle to strengthen it, double edged, and brought to a long point, both edge and point as sharp as a razor ; it must be a copy of the old Roman sword, and for use at close quarters there could not be a more formidable weapon. I found afterwards that as the curved hanjia is the national weapon of the mountain tribes, this short, straight, cut-and-thrust sword is the weapon of the Persians ; indeed we found it in use among all the people north of Persia right up to the Caucasus. Our Greek was a timber-merchant, *i.e.*, his business was to go about the mountains in search of the grand old walnut-trees which exist here and there, and to purchase them for export to England and elsewhere, where the beautiful veining of the

wood makes them very valuable for furniture, and especially for pianos. These men are known to carry a good deal of money to pay for their trees, and it is very necessary that they should take every precaution against robbery among these wild Koords. Our visitor's business here was to lay a complaint before the patriarch and seek justice at his hands. Some time before he had purchased a walnut-tree and paid for it; the vendor, who was a Nestorian, had sold it over again to another merchant, and there was a dispute between the two purchasers. In the evening our friend was at the patriarch's *levée*; I heard the patriarch say a few words to him, and saw the man's face brighten, and conjectured, what turned out to be the case, that the patriarch had given a decision in his favour.

On another occasion I had strolled down to the group of trees beside the church, and saw a number of our Nestorian friends seated on the ground in a large circle. I was going to join them, thinking they were only holding a friendly conversation, when I was told that they were conducting a trial. "A trial! what about?" "A murder; one man killed another, and the widow has had him brought up for trial." "But who is trying him?" I asked, looking in vain round the circle in search of the judge. "Oh, the mattran is trying him. It is the patriarch's business, but I suppose he wanted to pay the mattran a compliment, so he asked him to take it." "Is the man guilty?" "Yes, there is no doubt about that." "Then what will they do with him?" "Oh, he will have to pay blood-money to the widow."

We narrowly escaped a tragedy still nearer home. A fine, frank, good-natured young fellow, a henchman of the patriarch's, and one of those who were told off to our service, had a quarrel with his brother, and stabbed him with the ever-ready hanjiar; his brother fired his gun in return, but happily missed. Our young man was in disgrace for a day or two, but the wound he had inflicted was

not serious, and about the third day he was filling the chibouks and handing the coffee as usual.

The relations of the patriarch form an aristocracy, the patriarchal revenue being by custom apportioned to their support. These revenues consist of the profits of lands and villages, of offerings in the nature of tithes, and of presents, which, according to the custom of the East, are made by every one who has a favour to ask, or even a right to claim, or who desires to pay his homage acceptably to his superior.

Next after the patriarch in dignity is the metropolitan, the only one left out of the twenty-five who once owned allegiance to the patriarch of the East. *Mattran* is the Syriac for metropolitan; he is usually designated by his title—the mattran; his dynastic name is *Hnan Isu*, which means mercy of Jesus. It is not an unusual Christian name among the people, who seem to delight in such names as much as our own Puritans did. It is the privilege of the mattran to be the consecrator of the patriarch. He has jurisdiction over three bishops (*Aboona*)—Mar Yohannan, * Mar Sor Isu, † and Mar Dink'ha. ‡ They have no territorial designations, but are known by their dynastic names; and all four exercise their office in the territory of Bisham-is-din, much harassed, I fear, by their Koordish neighbours.

There are also the following bishops:—Mar Serghees of Gelu, Mar Slewa of Gawar, Mar Isu, Mar Yavilah, and Mar Yohnan of Berwar. In Oroomiah, Mar Goriel, Mar Yohannan, and Mar Yohnan. Mar Yussuf of Djezerah joined the American missionaries and married, and is disowned by the Nestorian Church. There were also formerly two other bishops in Djezerah, but their succession has not been filled up.

This makes a total of twelve bishops, besides the patriarch, in the actual exercise of their office. Vacant

* John. † Servant of Jesus. ‡ Brightness, or Epiphany.

sees are under the care of the patriarch, who keeps them in his own hand, or allots them to a neighbouring bishop at his discretion. The bishops, I gathered, are maintained partly by property, partly by tithes (which are voluntary), but the amount of their incomes, I should think, is very inconsiderable, even from the native basis of estimate.



THE ARCHDEACON OF TYARI
(From a Photograph.)

There are two archdeacons—one in the Tyari district, one in that of Tehoma. The accompanying woodcut is a portrait of the Archdeacon of Tyari.

The number of priests (*kasha*), as collected from the statistics given in an appendix, is nineteen; but the list is perhaps not quite complete. In their appointment, in

case of a vacancy in any village church, the malek of the village and the principal people nominate a man to the bishop, who consecrates. Any one is eligible to the office ; but practically, in the majority of cases, it is one of a priestly family, who is trained for and elected to the pastorate of a village. The patriarch has also the right to consecrate a priest, without cure, at his discretion.

Many of the village churches are endowed with a field or vineyard, part of whose produce is paid to the priest. He also receives voluntary offerings, and some trifling fees for tuition. Some few of the churches have a larger amount of property, which is farmed to a serder (guardian, warden). The patriarch nominates the serder, receiving a present ; the serder takes charge of the repairs of the church and the cost of Divine worship. He, of course, makes a handsome profit out of his holding, and only a portion of the profit of the church lands goes to the maintenance of the priest.

The ecclesiastical revenues of both priests and deacons are quite insufficient for their maintenance, and they all practise some secular employment also—the priests, I think, almost universally agricultural or pastoral employments only.

The order of deacons (*shamasha*) is a permanent and numerous order, since a priest may not celebrate Holy Communion without the assistance of a deacon. It is probable that the number of deacons is at least equal to the number of priests ; but there are often several deacons to one church, so that there are probably considerably more of the third order than of the second.

The deacons have a small share in the offerings made to the church which they serve.

The minor offices of sub-deacon (*hupat-diacona*) and reader (*karuyah*) are also recognised ; but since no one was pointed out to me as a sub-deacon or reader I imagine that they are practically obsolete.

CHAPTER XIX.

RABBAN YONAN.

MANY years ago I took a good deal of interest in the subject of the ancient hermits and recluses. I made some researches into their history and wrote a couple of papers upon them.* The picturesque externals of their life, and especially the religious and psychological problems which their inner life presented, attracted me greatly. I went out of my way to see a man who had scooped himself out a subterranean habitation and laid claim to the character of a hermit on one of the hill-tops overhanging the Wye; but I came to the conclusion that he was simply trading on the ignorant curiosity of neighbours and tourists. I paid a visit also to a hermit living in an ancient hermitage scooped out of a rocky hill-side, overlooking the Seine near Mantes; but though the hermitage was genuine and interesting, the hermit I found was only an old peasant paid to live in the hermitage in the day-time.

But here in Kochanes I was delighted to discover a genuine example of the mediæval hermit of the best type, uniting in his own person the characters of man of learning, poet, visionary, and prophet.

The patriarch had invited him, among the other notables of the people, to visit us at Kochanes, and I heard a good deal of him before he came, which greatly excited my interest.

He used to live for some years in the little chamber which I have described, adjoining the church of Kochanes,

* "Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages." Virtue & Co.

then in a chamber beside the church of Asheetha ; now he has removed to a kind of hermitage up in the mountains, where he lives a life of study, contemplation, and prayer. He foretells the future, and the people believe that his prophecies are fulfilled ; he sees visions ; he writes poems ; he is esteemed the most learned man of the nation, and is



RABBAN YONAN.
(From a Photograph.)

held in great respect by all classes of the people. The patriarch and several of the bishops have been his pupils. I must give two of the stories they told me about him.

On one occasion while the Rabban was engaged in devotion in church Satan appeared to him, and asked him why he was always saying "Holy, holy, holy" to God ; he could not make Him holy by saying it. He replied that God is holy,

and it is the duty of His creatures, and was his delight, to be always praising Him as "Holy, holy, holy"; whereupon Satan fell upon him and beat him, and finally took him and cast him on the flat roof of the church. Next morning when the priests and people came to prayers they did not find Rabban Yonan there before them as usual. They searched the sanctuary, but he was not there. One mounted the ladder to the roof, and there found him insensible, bruised, and bloody, where Satan had flung him.

One day as he was travelling along the road a Mussulman laid hold of him and made him carry his sack of flour. Presently some Nestorians met them, and began to beat the Mussulman for the indignity he had put upon their Rabban. The Mussulman protested that he did not know his sacred character, or he should not have done it, begged his pardon, and would have resumed his sack; but Rabban Yonan interfered to prevent the beating, and persisted in carrying the sack, saying such was the Gospel command, "If a man compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."

The first sight of him was enough to give one confidence in him as a transparently honest, single-minded man. He is about thirty-five years old, with a pleasant face and unpretending manners, and nothing which would at first sight make a stranger think him a remarkable person.

I have had the pleasure of several conversations with the Rabban. At nineteen years of age, he told me, he made the resolution to give up earthly labour and to give himself to study, especially the study of Divine things. I ascertained that he knew the history of St. Anthony and Macarius, and had read the letters of Jerome on the ascetic life, so that his asceticism is not entirely of native growth, but runs upon the old lines. He told me, in perfect simplicity and good faith, some of the visions he had had, and interpreted one of them which he had three years ago as relating to my visit to the Nestorians.

I do not feel at liberty to give any particulars of an

interesting spiritual conversation we had together ; but I may say that my whole intercourse with him left me with a strong respect and liking for him. In studying the lives of the old mystics I had often noticed the curious practical shrewdness which formed a part of their mental character. It was probably confidence in their shrewd sense, as well as faith in their disinterestedness and rectitude, which made their counsels so often sought by their contemporaries. I was much interested in noticing the same trait of character in the Rabban. He was the first man who talked to me of the mineral resources of the mountains, and the possibility of English capital and skill being applied to their development, to the advantage of the Nestorian people as well as of the English adventurers. In the last sight of the recluse and visionary which rests on my memory, he had a breech-loading English rifle to his shoulder, and was glancing along the sights with the air of a man who quite appreciated its merits.

The first inquiry which rises in the mind in studying such cases is, (1) are these men impostors, and only pretend to their abnormal experiences ? or, (2) are their dreams and visions and prophecies real and divinely sent ? or, (3) are the men honest, and believe that they see visions, and have encounters with Satan, while it is all unreal, and is owing to some special state of brain or peculiarity of constitution ?

This is, perhaps, not the place to write down all the thoughts which passed through my mind on the general inquiry, as I lay under the shade of the church trees and watched the Nestorian seer's intercourse with the people, and studied the play of his countenance. I think I ought here to limit myself to this special instance.

And first, I say again that Rabban Yonan is no impostor ; if my judgment is worth anything he is a single-hearted, honest man. Secondly, I hesitate to believe in the reality and Divine origin of his experiences, because I

think in all the cases I heard of there seemed nothing in the history worthy of such a special Divine interposition. Therefore, thirdly, I believe that Rabban Yonan is entirely convinced of the truth of his visions and dreams, and all the other remarkable things which he relates, but that they are all subjective phenomena. I am not surprised that a man who lives a solitary, ascetic, contemplative life, like Rabban Yonan, should experience some uncommon mental and spiritual phenomena. We all know what strange thoughts sometimes pass through our minds without our volition, and without any cause which we can trace. I am not surprised that a solitary, ascetic, contemplative, who lives in the presence of God, and who is entirely possessed with the truth that nothing happens without God, should have strange involuntary thoughts come into his mind, that they should be of a spiritual character, that they should be so vividly impressed upon his exalted mental state, that he should refer them to God as the sender, and should consider them to be visions. And in a lower and natural sense I should admit that they come from God, and may, in that sense, be called visions. I am not surprised that these visions should sometimes take the shape of a transaction in which the seer and other personæ, human or spiritual, take an active part, and that the seer should be convinced, beyond the reach of argument, that the transaction was real; when dreams seem so real, and only the waking dispels the illusion, is it so very strange that a waking dream should seem still more real? And since they take place in the waking state there is nothing to rouse the dreamer, and convince him that he has been in one of the phases of that state in which the body lies quiescent and the senses in abeyance, while the mind lives, unguided by the will, in a subjective world which has no reality.

Will this account for the fact—I accept it as a fact—that Rabban Yonan, having entered the church in the

evening for prayer, was found next morning, without any volition or consciousness of his own, on the roof of the church, bruised and bloody? I think the history of somnambulism will easily explain this, for *there was a ladder* giving access to the roof. I fear I shall greatly shock some of my Nestorian friends should they read this, which I shall regret; and grieve good Rabban Yonan, which I shall regret still more. But perhaps these are two reasons the more why I should say it, with this addition for their sakes, that I believe this is the view which will be taken by the vast majority of English Christians, including the wisest and most spiritually-minded among us.

The Rabban is a deacon of his Church, and took part in the regular services of the church while I was there. I have given a portrait of him from his photograph, which, however, fails to give the right expression of simple goodness which was the usual expression of his features.



SOUTH-WEST VIEW OF THE CHURCH OF KOCHANES.

(From a Photograph.)

CHAPTER XX.

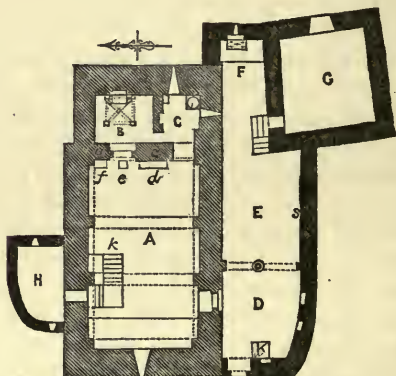
THE CHURCH OF KOCHANES—CHURCH FURNITURE.

ABOUT the middle of the valley stands a picturesque group of rocks, and on the largest of these the church of Kochanes has been built. The old church, dedicated to Mart Mariam, still stands a mile off up the valley, but unused and with its roof partly fallen in. The present church was erected about seventy or eighty years ago, and is dedicated to Mar Shimoon, the name-saint of the patriarchal family. It is a plain, substantial stone structure, but its situation, and some peculiarities of its construction, give it considerable picturesque effect, of which the reader can judge for himself from the accompanying engraving.

Let us first walk round the outside. The rocks about it are chiefly at the east end, picturesque in form, with nooks between them, and usually a goat with her little one leaping about them, or sheltering from the sun on a ledge of rock under the church wall. A grove of fine trees shelters the church on the north side, and several of the channels through which the irrigation of the land is conducted run among the trees, and give the grove the pleasant addition—tenfold more pleasant in these hot countries—of the sight and sound of running water. The ground slopes rapidly down from the south side of the church into the deep ravine. On the north, west, and south sides are a number of graves with a simple slab of stone laid over each of them, or a simple unhewn stone set up at the head. Under the west wall of the church is a row of graves of the patriarchal family, with gravestones shaped with the axe, and with a cross or an ornamental device incised upon them. No enclosure marks the limits of a graveyard, only the graves are clustered round the church. The ground was sprinkled over with pretty wild pinks, which came into bloom during our stay. It is the west end of the church which is represented in our woodcut. The reader will observe in the foreground the footpath leading down from the village, and on the left-hand side of the picture, part of the grove of trees. The ladder which affords access to the church door is plainly seen, and on the shelf of rock beside it stand two men, who give a scale by which the dimensions of the building may be estimated. The extent of the church, as distinguished from the courtyard on the right and the appendage on the left, is easily seen by the different texture and colour of the masonry. The only access to the church is by means of this rude ladder. From its top round the visitor must make a high step over the threshold, while at the same time he bends his head low to avoid the lintel, for the door is only three feet high. To a stranger the ascent and descent to and from church are not without

some real risk of a false step and a fall; but the people, accustomed to mount to bed on the housetops by such ladders, walk up and come down face foremost without needing to steady themselves with even a touch of the hand. Having effected a safe landing without falling off the top round of the ladder, or knocking his head against the hard lintel of the door, the visitor will find himself in the courtyard, lettered *ε* in the accompanying plan. The nearer half of this courtyard is protected by a timber roof, and forms a porch, *δ*, open to the east; its two walls, *w* and *s*, are pierced with several small windows, which overlook the approaches. At the further end of the court is a recess, *φ*, in the thick wall, within which is placed a little altar, and behind it a small window, so that this end of the court forms a little open-air chapel, in which the daily prayers are often said in summer-time. It is not unusual among the Christians of the East for prayers, especially evening prayers, to be said out of doors in front of the church. On the south of this chapel are a few stone steps, which give access to the upper floor of the building, *γ*. It is a building of two stories, forming a little house, such as we have adjoining many of our English churches. With us these chambers were inhabited by a chantry priest or a recluse, and this little house at Kochanes was first inhabited by one of the patriarchs, then it was the usual dwelling of Rabban Yonan, now it is unoccupied. There is a curious access to the lower story of this house by a trap-door in the floor of the porch at *κ*, which leads to a passage under the south side of the courtyard, which I have no doubt is really the space between the sloping south side of the rock and the wall which has been built up on that side to render the church inaccessible. The wall between *δ* and *γ* is only a low parapet wall, over which we look into the ravine and up the opposite hill-side. We take off our shoes in the porch before entering the church, pausing a

moment to examine the bas-reliefs with which its lintel is ornamented. The ornaments consist of a central cross of knot work, and side ornaments of the same style, very like the carvings on a Saxon churchyard cross. Again, the visitor must step over the high threshold, and bend his head low under the lintel, for the door is only three feet four inches high, and he will find himself in the inside of the church, in almost darkness, for the only windows are a cross loop, high up in the west gable, and two small lancets in the sacristy. When his eyes have adjusted themselves to the



PLAN OF THE CHURCH OF KOCHANES.

twilight he will dimly see the interior, which we will try to describe by help of the accompanying plan.

The church is divided into two unequal chambers by a thick wall, *a a*; the western chamber is the nave, *A*. The smaller chamber is subdivided by a screen wall six or seven feet high into a sacrarium, *B*, and a sacristy, *C*. The whole interior is covered in by a plain stone-vaulted roof, divided into bays by broad stone arches carried on pilasters. The dividing wall is pierced by a narrow chancel arch,

placed centrally with regard to the sacrarium and altar, and therefore not in the centre of the east wall of the nave. A small square door at the south leads into the sacristy; the chancel arch and the door are ascended by three steps. Over the altar is a canopy of stone consisting of a pyramidal roof of stone carried by round arches on four pillars. The structure almost fills the sacrarium, and is almost unseen from the nave. Behind the altar is a recess which is empty. The sacristy serves also as the baptistry. The font at *i* is narrow, but proportionally deep; the child to be baptized, by trine immersion, is thrice let down into it as into a miniature well. In the nave are three tables or altars at *d e f*: *d* is called the altar of prayers, the anthem books, &c., are placed upon it, and a rude chandelier; *f* is the altar of the Gospels, and a copy of the Gospels lies upon it wrapped in a cloth, with a cross laid upon it; another small table at *e* has also a cross laid upon it. There are no seats in the nave; no one ever sits down during Divine service; a cross-handled staff is sometimes used by aged and infirm people, upon which they lean when tired. At the west end of the church is a narrow platform about four feet high; under it are buried twelve of the patriarchs, and a beginning of a second row, on the top of the first, is made at its north end, where the late patriarch lies buried. At *k* is a stone stair, which gives access to a small door high up in the north wall, through which is entered the chamber H. This is an affix to the church, where the bread for the Holy Eucharist is prepared and baked. There is a way out of this chamber into the space between the groined roof and the flat external roof of the church.

Looking at the elevations of the interior, we see that the side walls are divided into bays by the pilasters which carry the broad groining ribs, and each bay is ornamented with sunk panelling in two stages. The chancel arch is surmounted by a string course, carried in the shape of a

stepped gable, and the whole is enclosed in a semicircular arch which spans the entire east wall. There is a niche on each side of the chancel arch. A curtain hangs across the arch, which is drawn across it at certain times of the eucharistic service.

The *Instrumenta* are simple, and nearly all modern ; whatever the church had which was valuable was carried off, and the rest destroyed by Bedr Khan Beg thirty years ago. The altar is, I presume, of stone, of small size ; it is entirely covered with a vestment of white silk (?), in which a pattern of silver wire is inwoven. Two candlesticks stand upon it, and a cross is placed in the recess behind it. The altar is so situated that it would not be possible for the celebrant to stand anywhere except in front of it in his ministration.

The chalice is a large semicircular bowl, without the tall stem and knob and spreading base of our English type ; the paten a large plain salver ; both of silver.

The bronze censer, with rudely-designed scriptural figures embossed upon it, is an antique, found some years ago on the site of a church ; it stands, when not in use, on a dwarf pillar in the south-east angle of the nave. A rude lamp-stand with several branches, surmounted by the figure of a bird, doubtless intended for the Holy Dove, stands upon the altar of prayers, but seems to be seldom used ; the clergy commonly use rolls of thin wax taper, held in the hand, when they need a light by which to read gospel or anthem. The lectern is (as is usually the case in Eastern churches) a very simple wooden stand, like a broad low office stool, with the top V shaped so that the book lies only partly open upon it. A long staff standing in a corner of the sacrarium with an ivory crutch handle looked like a patriarchal staff. The service books were numerous, none very old, but the most modern finely written in a large bold black character, exactly in the style of the grand calligraphy of the ninth and tenth centuries. Every book was wrapped in a cloth covering to protect it from dust.

The vestments, I think, have a special interest. The earliest illustration of the use of the chasuble as a clerical vestment is of the early part of the sixth century ; it afterwards came into general use both in the Greek and Roman churches. There is good reason to believe that previously to this period the pallium was used by the bishops and priests as the upper vestment, while the deacons wore only the white tunic and orarium. It will be remembered that the breach between the Nestorians and the rest of the Church took place about the middle of the fifth century ; and it is interesting to find that the Nestorian clergy at the present day wear the pallium and not the chasuble. The cope, which the canons of 1603 require the celebrant to wear in cathedrals, resembles the pallium, though perhaps the framers of the canon were not aware that they were making this near approach to primitive usage. Some of our readers will be glad of a more particular account of these Nestorian vestments. The deacon wears an alb, which they call soudra, shirt (soudra d'oumra, "shirt of the Church"); it is shorter and fuller than the mediæval shape, with several red or purple crosses sewn upon the breast and back. The alb is girded with a narrow blue and white girdle, "zounara," which is regarded as an essential part of the clerical vestments. He wears also an "ourara" (orarium), stole, of the same material as the girdle, crossed over the right shoulder, and only long enough for the ends to be tucked inside the girdle. The priest wears the alb, girdle, and the stole over both shoulders, and crossed over the breast ; at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist he wears also a "chadra" (tent), which is a large square of white linen or calico, with red or purple crosses sewed at the upper angles. It is thrown over the shoulders, and held together in front by one hand ; at certain places in the service he raises it from his shoulders and places it so as to cover the head ; at other places he takes the corners in his hands and stretches it

out to its full width so as to form a kind of screen between himself and the people. The only difference between the vestments of the priest and bishop is, that the latter wears a long stole, not crossed on the breast, reaching down to the ankles. On entering a house, a man keeps on his turban but takes off his shoes, but the clergy officiating at Holy Communion are bareheaded, but retain their shoes.

The ordinary dress of the clergy is like that of the laity, except that the clergy often—not universally—wear a turban of dark colour; they even wear the hanjia like the laity. I called to mind that the mediæval English canons are perpetually forbidding the clergy to wear clothes like other people, and especially railing against their wearing the baselard or dagger, which every laymen had hanging to his girdle. I observed that both priests and laymen laid aside their hanjias in the porch when they went into the church.

CHAPTER XXI.

DIVINE SERVICE.

DR. BADGER in his book, "The Nestorians and their Liturgies," and in a pamphlet recently published, has translated the Liturgies of the Nestorian Church. They are of the family of the Liturgy of St. James, and present many points of interest. I shall not attempt an analysis; it would be tedious and uninteresting to the general reader, it would be insufficient for the student, but both may be interested in a description of the external aspect of the service.

I did not actually communicate with the Nestorians. We may hope that formal explanations may, some day soon, relieve them of the imputation of heresy which has so long severed them from the other branches of the Church; but in the meantime it was not my duty to act as though those explanations had already been happily made and accepted. But I did "assist" at their worship, and allow myself to be put into a conspicuous place in church, as an evidence of sympathy with these our fellow-Christians.

Justin Martyr tells us that the primitive Christians were accustomed to assemble for their worship before dawn; and it was yet dark when the beating of the board, which answers the purpose of a bell to the Eastern churches, warned us to rise, and the dawn was only gradually brightening when we climbed the rude entrance to the church. A group was already gathered in the porch with the patriarch in the midst. We gravely saluted

one another, put off our shoes, and entered the church. The patriarch took his stand at the east end of the nave beside the north wall.

The priests and deacons stood in front of the people. The men nearly filled the nave ; the women stood on the south side. Every one as he came in kissed the cross on the desk before the chancel steps, and that on the book of the Gospels, and the patriarch's hand, and then fell back into his place.

The service was performed by a priest and two deacons. There was a good deal more of moving from place to place and of ceremonial than we English Churchmen are accustomed to. The service was chanted to a "tone" which to our ears was very strange and unmusical ; but then Nestorians, who have attended some of our most musical churches, have found our chanting equally unpleasing to them. One of the most curious things in the matter of the service is that the deacon every now and then, like the chorus of a Greek play, comments on the progress of the service, even while the priest is still going on with it, and tells the people what appropriate thoughts and feelings they ought to be entertaining. For example, before the anaphora, while the priest is silently praying, the deacon says : " With reverence stand and behold the things that are about to be performed. . . . Let none dare to speak, and whosoever prays let him pray mentally, and let all in fear and silence stand and pray, Peace be with us."

And when the priest signs the elements with the sign of the cross, the deacon explains the symbolism : " With the enlightened eyes of the mind behold the meekness, humility, and lowliness of Christ our Saviour, and with the thought of pure intention let us discern and see the Son, the only-begotten of the Father, led away to the passion of the cross, and let us pray, Peace be with us." Again, in the middle of a long prayer the deacon says :

“Lift up your sight to the height of the highest above, and behold with the eyes of your minds, and contemplate that which is being done at this time. The seraphim stand in awe before the throne of the glory of Christ, and with one loud voice sing unceasing alleluias and praises to the body which is laid out, and to the cup which is mingled, whilst the people pray, and the priest intercedes for all the world ; and mentally say, Peace be with us.”

Again, while the priest is invoking the descent of the Holy Spirit on the elements, the deacon comments on it : “How awful is this moment, and how dreadful is this hour, in which the priest invokes the Spirit. . . . In stillness and in fear, and with trembling and amazement stand and pray, Peace be with us.”

At the administration, the priest takes his stand on the south side of the chancel arch, a (sub)-deacon concealed by the curtain holds the paten for him ; the deacon with the cup stands on the north side of the arch ; the people come up, one by one, and communicate standing ; the priest gives the bread usually into the mouth, sometimes into the hand, saying, “The Body of our Lord, to the pure believer for the forgiveness of sins ;” then the communicant crosses to the other side, where the deacon holds the great chalice-bowl in both hands with a napkin covering his hands, and says, “The precious Blood, to the pure believer for the forgiveness of sins, a spiritual feast unto life everlasting.” The communicant holds the long end of the napkin under his chin, drinks, wipes his mouth with the napkin, and retires. Some kiss the hands of priest and deacon—the hands which give them the heavenly food. First, the priests and deacons communicate, then the men and boys, then the women and girls ; the children were communicated in the bread only ; but I think the bread given to them is sprinkled with a few drops of wine. While the distribution was proceeding a group of deacons round the altar of prayers chanted anthems.

A few words about the elements. The bread is made of wheat flour; the corn is preferred which has been gleaned by the girls; it is ground in a hand-mill; it is made with leaven; and the Nestorians have a tradition on the subject, which makes them regard the question as of the most sacred and solemn importance. The story says that as our Lord went up out of the Jordan after His baptism, John Baptist collected in a phial some of the water which was dripping from His sacred body; at his death he gave it to his disciple John, afterwards the apostle. At the Last Supper our Lord, the story says, gave to each disciple a loaf, but to John He gave two loaves, and put it into his heart to eat one but to preserve the other, that it might serve as leaven to be retained in the Church for perpetual commemoration. When John stood by the cross and saw the blood and water issue from the Lord's pierced side, he took the phial of the water of baptism from his bosom and added to it of the water from His side, and he took the loaf and dyed it in the precious blood. And when the disciples went forth to convert the nations, they took John's loaf of the Last Supper, of which the Lord had said, "This is My body," dyed as it was in the blood from His side, and ground it into powder, and mixed it with flour and salt, and divided it among them to serve as leaven for the body and blood of Christ in the Church. Also they took of the water of Baptism and of the wounded side, and mixed with it oil of unction, and divided this also to be a leaven for baptism.

Whether the Nestorians of the present day believe this legend, and believe that they possess this sacred leaven, I do not know; but as a matter of fact the leaven with which the bread for the Holy Communion is made is handed on from sacrament to sacrament, and the bread is prepared by the clergy, and made entirely within the precincts of the church. The sacrament is reserved for the sick: I believe it is not placed in a pyx, or ciborium,

but is folded in a cloth and placed in some convenient place in the sacristy. The bread is made into circular cakes about two and a half inches across by quarter of an inch thick, with a device stamped upon them. They show a similar reverent care about the other element also. I was sauntering through the valley with one of the patriarch's people on Saturday evening, when one of the priests overtook and passed us with a pitcher in his hand. After some time we met him returning with his pitcher full. On asking what he had been so far to procure, I was told that he had been to a spring, which was reckoned the purest in the valley, to fetch water with which to mix the cup for the morrow's sacrament.

The Eucharist is usually celebrated only on great festivals, but it is usual for the whole congregation to communicate on those occasions. After the service is over there is a customary salutation, "May your Eucharist be blessed to you."

After their service was over the patriarch allowed me to celebrate Holy Communion for our own party at the same altar, and many of the people remained to witness our ritual, and no doubt to show their sympathy with us. One of their deacons, a near relative of the patriarch's, kindly gave me such help as he could; *e.g.*, without my asking it he administered the chalice, while I said the words of administration; he thereby saved our rite from one apparent defect in Nestorian eyes, for with them the priest does not celebrate without the assistance of a deacon.

Prayers are said in church every morning and evening, and I frequently assisted at evening prayer. The clergy at these offices wear no clerical vestments. The office was always said by the patriarch himself standing in his usual place. The service is short; it seemed to consist of the chanting of some psalms, with a brief lesson and a few prayers. As the people came in they kissed the cross,

the Gospels, the patriarch's hand ; at the conclusion the patriarch gave his blessing. There was always a fair congregation.

Here is a translation of one of the "morning praises" which forms part of the daily prayer. The former part is chanted antiphonally in semi-choirs, the latter part being said by the whole choir. The group of Nestorians who translated it to me seemed impressed with a sense of its beauty :—

"*1st semi-choir.*—At the dawn of the day we praise Thee, O Lord ; Thou art the Redeemer of all creatures ; give us by Thy mercy a peaceful day, and give us remission of our sins.

"*2nd semi-choir.*—Cut not off our hope ; shut not Thy door against our faces, and cease not Thy care over us. O God, according to our worthiness reward us not. Thou alone knowest our weakness.

"*1st semi-choir.*—Scatter, O Lord, in the world love, peace, and unity. Raise up (righteous) kings, priests, and judges. Reconcile the princes,* heal the sick, keep the whole, and forgive the sins of all men.

"*2nd semi-choir.*—In the way that we are going may Thy grace keep us, O Lord, as it kept the child David from Saul ; give us Thy mercy according as we are pressing on, that we may attain to peace according to Thy will.

"*1st semi-choir.*—The grace which kept the prophet Moses in the sea, and Daniel in the pit, and by which the companions of Ananias were kept in the fire, by that grace deliver us from evil.

"*Whole choir.*—In the morning we all arise ; we all worship the Father, we praise the Son, we acknowledge the Holy Spirit. The grace of the Father, and the mercy of the Son, and the hovering of the Holy Spirit the Third Person, be our help every day. Our help is in Thee. In

* *i.e.*, Give peace to the nations.

Thee, our true Physician, is our hope. Put the medicine of Thy mercy on our wounds, and bind up our bruises that we be not lost. Without Thy help we are powerless to keep Thy commandments. O Christ, who helpest those who fulfil Thy will, keep Thy worshippers. We ask with sighing, we beseech Thy mercy, we ask forgiveness from that merciful One who opens His door to all who turn to Him. Every day I promise Thee that to-morrow I will repent; all my days are past and gone, my faults still remain. O Christ, have mercy on me, have mercy on me."

I may also give here the translation of part of the funeral service. The burial service of the Nestorians is very full and dramatic, and there is a separate service for priests, deacons, laymen, women, and children. Dr. Badger translates the service for priests as a specimen. The following anthem to be said while the corpse is being put into the grave differs a little from that which he has given. It is in the form of a dialogue between the newly dead and those whom he is about to join in Hades and the mourners:

The newly dead.—"Hail, my brethren and friends who sleep. Open the door that I may enter in and see your ranks.

Those in Hades.—"Come, enter, and see how many giants are sleeping here, and have been made dust and rust and worms, in the bosom of Sheol.

"Come, enter and see, O child of death, the race of Adam; see and gaze where thy kind dwells.

"Come, enter and see the abundance of the bones and their commingling. The bone of the king and the bone of the servant are not separated.

"Come, enter and see the great corruption we are dwelling in.

The mourners.—"Wait for the Lord, who will come and raise you by His right hand."

The second Sunday we passed at Kochanes was the octave of Pentecost according to the Nestorian calendar. After breakfast the two boys, Isa and Kaiser, came into our room in their shirts and trousers and wet to the skin. We found it was the custom for people to sprinkle one another with water on this day, in memory, no doubt, of the baptism of the 3,000 converts on the great Pentecost, and we took our part in the observances of the day by giving the boys a fresh sprinkling. When the patriarch and his party paid us their visit a little after, we found that the custom was not, as such old customs are with us, confined to the young people, but all ranks and classes, as it used to be with us, took their share in them. Bishops sprinkled bishops, and Mar Sergees and I sprinkled one another.

This set us talking about other similar customs, and I took down those which were told me in answer to my inquiries. At Christmas the children carry a garland to church; it is placed on the table at the chancel step during Divine service; afterwards the children dress up one of the girls as a bride (no doubt representing the Blessed Virgin) and go round to the houses of the villagers, who give them some small present—not in money, but in kind; the children, lastly, make a feast upon the things thus given them.

On Palm Sunday branches of a tree which at that time of year has handsome red branches, are blessed by the priest and distributed to the people, who carry them home; each makes his branch into a ring and hangs it up in the house till next year. There is no procession, as there used to be with us.

At the beginning of Lent some one is dressed up to personify Lent (Soma). He goes from house to house in the village, and at each there is a little dialogue. "Who are you?" "I am Soma," &c. The point of the custom is that "Soma" recites the rule of fasting. Some fast till

evening, some only till dinner ; and if any one eats before then Soma will come and cut off the hand which holds the forbidden food. So when the children get hungry and impatient for food they are silenced by the threat that Soma will come and cut off their hand if they eat before the proper time.

CHAPTER XXII.

DOCTRINES.

INTO the subject of the doctrines held by the Nestorian Church Dr. Badger has inquired with all the advantage of a knowledge of the language, a study of their literature, and some years' residence among them. He has devoted one volume of his valuable work* to a detailed comparison of the Thirty-nine Articles of our Church with statements in the Nestorian service books and the writings of approved Nestorian writers, and has shown the large surface over which we run parallel with them, and the places in which we differ. To that volume I refer those who desire full information on this important subject; a brief statement of results will be enough for my present purpose.

In constitution.—"They have the apostolic organisation of the Church in a threefold ministry, which has, beyond question, descended in an unbroken succession from the earliest ages to the present day. We note as points of difference from the constitution of our own Church—in some respects perhaps for the better, in others for the worse—the authority of the patriarch more autocratic than that of our archbishops; the hereditary succession to sees, as against our royal nomination to them; the popular election of a priest, in place of our system of nomination by a patron, who theoretically represents the interests of the people; the existence of a permanent order of deacons, as against our lamentable deficiency in this respect.

In doctrine.—"They hold a special presence of Christ in

* "The Nestorians and their Rituals."

the sacrament of the Eucharist, but do not adopt the Roman definition of the mode of the Presence. They administer in both kinds, and with leavened bread.

“ They have not exalted the Blessed Virgin Mary beyond the status of other eminent saints of the Church, and hesitate to call her Theotokos without explanation of the sense in which they allow the title.

“ In their more modern service books are invocations of saints, which, if I am rightly informed, are absent from their more ancient books, and the ideas of the intercession of the saints, and the consequent worship of the saints, enter very little into the popular religion.

“ They believe in an intermediate state of the departed, in which the faithful are capable of being benefited by the prayers of the Church, and they consequently pray for the dead, in the sense in which the primitive Church did so; but they do not believe in purgatory and its corollaries.

“ They make use of confession for edification; but they do not insist upon it as necessary, and practically, I believe, it is seldom used.

“ I conversed frequently with several of their most learned people on the question on which Nestorius was condemned by the Council of Ephesus. They define that they hold in the Unity of Christ, two natures, and two *knumi*, in one *parsopa*. They explain that *knuma* has not the same meaning as our word person, but means rather essence; while they say that the word *parsopa* does express nearly that which we mean by person. Their statements left on my mind a strong persuasion that they maintained the assertion of two *knumi* only because they considered it necessary to guard the truth of the whole and perfect humanity of Christ; and that the modern Nestorians at all events believe that there are two whole and perfect natures, the Divine and human natures, united, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of *parsopa*, in

one Christ. One of their service books has the two phrases, 'The Divine Nature clothed itself with the human nature;' 'There is one Son only, not a [Divine] Son and a [human] Son, making two.'"—*Dr. Badger*, ii. 41.

Dr. Badger says on this subject, in a paper read at the Church Conference, Liverpool, 1869, and printed in the *Colonial Church Chronicle* for 1869, page 416, &c. :—

"We should bear in mind when approaching the subject of Nestorianism, that [the great opponent of Nestorius] Cyril had, as Hooker says, 'avouched' in his writings against the Arians, that 'the Word, or Wisdom of God, hath but one nature, which is eternal, and whereunto He assumed flesh'; which declaration, although not so meant, was 'in process of time so taken, as though it had been his drift to teach that even as in the body and soul, so in Christ, God and man made but *one nature*,'*—an error which was subsequently condemned by the Council of Chalcedon. Bearing these things in mind, and also the different uses which conflicting theologians had made of the almost cognate terms *οὐσία* and *ὑποστάσις*, there is *à priori* ground for believing that Nestorius's formula of 'two natures and two *ὑποστάσεις*' in Christ was designed to combat the fearful error, which obtained so extensively afterwards, of the confusion of the Divine and human natures in our Blessed Lord. Nestorius denied to the last that he held two *distinct* persons in Christ; and Basnage, La Croze, Thomas à Jesu, and Mosheim, have defended him against the charge of heresy.

"But the question which more immediately concerns us is, whether the so-called Nestorians of the present day hold the heresy attributed to Nestorius? My own solemn conviction, after a careful study of their standard theology, is that they do not. Fortunately, some of the most eminent divines have come to the same conclusion, since even Assemani, as Gibbon justly remarks, 'can *hardly* discern

* Book v. chap. 52.

the guilt and error of the Nestorians ;* and our own learned Richard Field, writing two centuries and a half ago, says : ‘ But they that are now named Nestorians acknowledge that Christ was perfect God and perfect man from the first moment of His conception, and that Mary may rightly be said to be the mother of the Son of God, or of the Eternal Word, but think it not fit to call her the Mother of God, lest they might be thought to imagine that she conceived and bare the Divine nature of the three Persons—the name of God containing Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.’ †

“ That, I beg to remark by the way, is the main argument of the so-called Nestorians against the use of the word *θεοτόκος*, which, rendered in Syriac into ‘ Mother of God,’ is much stronger than the Greek title, or its Latin equivalent *Deipara*, implying that the Blessed Virgin was as much the parent of the Divinity as of the humanity of Christ. Field then goes on to say : ‘ Neither do these Christians so say there are two persons in Christ, as if the human nature did actually exist in itself, but only to imply that there is a potential aptness in it so to exist, if it were left unto itself. Yet the form of words which they use is not to be allowed, for it savoureth of heresy, and took beginning from heresy.’ Therein, also, I fully concur with the profound divine, and I have every reason to believe that in the event of any response on our part to their overtures for intercommunion with us, the so-called Nestorians would forego their present formula, and adopt that of the Council of Ephesus.”

Besides formal doctrines, it is right to say there is a wide region of pious opinions and traditionary practices into which I do not enter. It may be taken for granted that a people with the traditions of centuries still undisturbed, have picked up, and still retain, a good many unfounded opinions and superstitious practices. They are more or

* “Decline and Fall,” chap. 47, note.

† “Of the Church,” Book III. chap. 1.

less conscious of this, and are not unwilling to hear what the Church of England has to say on the subject. If I rightly appreciate their attitude of mind, they are proud of their ecclesiastical history, and tenacious of their ancient customs, and have far too much sense and spirit to be willing to put their Church into the hands of any other people—Roman, English, or American—to reform for them; but they are conscious of the need of some reforms, and are willing to learn, and not unwilling to make such reforms as shall commend themselves to their own reason and conscience. They have considerable confidence in the English Church, and are desirous of receiving its counsel and assistance.

CHAPTER XXIII.

EDUCATION.

THE system of education among the Nestorians is the same which, as we have seen, exists among the other Christian bodies of the East, the Armenians and Jacobites, and is the same in principle as that of the Mohammedans. It consists chiefly in learning the sacred books by rote in an obsolete language. The Nestorian scholars are set to learn the Psalter and the Gospels in old Syriac, and if they stay at school long enough they learn to translate these books into the modern language. But the children only go to school for the winter months, and cease to go at all after eleven or twelve, so that the majority of them on leaving school can neither read nor write. Usually only the priests can read. There are a few men, however, with a natural taste for learning, who educate themselves; but the book learning of these seems to be almost limited to their own ancient literature, whose remains are chiefly theological.

One evening when Benjamin and Nathan, the Aboona of Gelu, and Shamasha Johannan, the patriarch's cousin, were with us the conversation turned on astronomical subjects. We found that their notions were the primitive notions, that the earth is round, but flat like a millstone, and stands still while the heavens move round it. Mar Serghees adduced some of the old Scripture arguments, "God made the round world so fast that it cannot be moved," &c. Thinking to approach the subject from another side, I asked what caused the changes of

the moon, Johannan answered, "God made it so." I remembered Galileo, and did not imperil my character for orthodoxy by any further argument.

Yet they are a quick, intelligent people, quite capable of a high degree of cultivation. Chess is sometimes taken as a test of mental power; we played with several of them, and had the pleasure to be well beaten by them, the servants even looking on at the game with eager interest. They have the facility of acquiring languages, which seems to be common to Eastern people. Many of them know Koordish and Turkish as well as Syriac. Our interpreter knew something of English, German, and Russian besides. One Nestorian on a visit here, whom I found a very intelligent and agreeable companion, knows twelve languages—Syriac ancient and modern, Persian, ancient and modern, Turkish, Koordish, Arabic, Latin, Italian, French, English, and Russian. He has lived in Teheran, and dresses in modern European costume; but his brother, who is here among the Tehoma men, is still a picturesque and illiterate mountaineer.

The people are aware of their deficiency; they are very desirous of raising themselves in culture and civilisation; they are impressed with the idea that education must be the first step in this progress, and are earnestly asking help to introduce the European system of education. I trust that the Church of England will give this interesting people the very small amount of help and direction they ask. With the natural intelligence and energy and ambition of the people, an English system of education, so infinitely superior to anything in the East, either Turk or Christian, ought to put them in a fair way to become a remarkable people, capable of playing an important part in the future history of these Eastern regions.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MUSIC.

I MADE some inquiry about the musical instruments and music of the Nestorians. I found that they have the shepherd's pipe and tabor, a kind of flageolet and a kind of clarionet, but I could not learn that they had anything like the bagpipes, which in mediæval England accompanied this phase of civilisation; and I could not ascertain that they had any stringed instrument. Shamasha Johannan had made for himself a kind of lute with three strings, played with a bow of horse-hair, but he had copied it from a Persian instrument, and taught himself to play. He played us some ecclesiastical tunes, some dance music which was inspiring, and some tunes very like those we usually hear on the bagpipes.

When the Oroomiah men came, there was a musician in their company who had brought his lute to enliven the journey, an instrument of the same kind as, but superior to, Johannan's. There were also some singing men among them, and they were all fond of music, so that we had a concert in our rooms nearly every evening. The Persian singing was very interesting to us but very unpleasing; the singer pitches a very high note, and quavers about in quarter tones, for Persian music is so scientific that it has quarter tones, so that an English ear fails to catch the melody. Once they played and sang a Turkish song, which had been written after, and on the subject of, the Crimean war, and on my expressing a wish to have the melody noted down, I found that any system of musical notation

was quite unknown to my friends ; they learnt everything by ear.

I inquired diligently for any ancient ballads or songs, but could not ascertain that they possessed any, ancient or modern. I suppose they must have them, and that some future traveller will be more fortunate than I. What my friends sung every evening was ecclesiastical music-exclusively.

The evening before our departure I was deep in an



A PERSIAN NESTORIAN MUSICIAN.

interesting conversation with Rabban Yonan in my own room, when the patriarch sent me a message to come and see the sword-dance, which I had several times expressed a wish to see. On coming down I found that the patriarch, instead of holding the usual evening levée in his own room, was holding it *al fresco* in the narrow space between my house and Benjamin's. The stone benches outside the two houses afforded a divan for some, others squatted on the ground. When we had paid our respects and taken

the places reserved for us beside the patriarch, the entertainment began. Our Persian minstrel thrummed a tune on his lute. Two dancers entered the lists armed with the curved scimitar and the small, round, gaily-tasselled shield. The first part of the performance consisted of graceful posturing; they kept time with their feet to the music in a kind of *trois-temps*, now with slow, graceful wavings of the sword, then with quick twistings of the shield, which made its gay silk cords and tassels twirl round the central spike; they passed and repassed one another with a graceful salute. Suddenly one uttered a shrill cry, and crouched down at one end of the lists, holding his sword and shield before him; it was a challenge; the other approached and crouched in a similar attitude, the music ceased, and they began a mimic combat. This crouching position is that in which they fight in single combat; because it presents the least possible surface to the enemy's attack. Quick cuts were met by dexterous parries with the shield; and after a few minutes of this sword-play, they jumped up, the music struck up again, and they recommenced their posturing. When either was tired he withdrew and another stepped into the lists. The monotony of the exhibition was varied by the specialities of the performers. One played the buffoon, cut capers in his dancing, uttered sharp shrieks at every stroke in the fencing, and made grimaces at the spectators. Another well-made young fellow distinguished himself by the grace of his attitudes, his superb air, and the disdainful glances of his half-shut eyes. Not unfrequently the sport turns into half-earnest, and the combatants will continue their duel till the first blood is drawn. There were symptoms of it on this occasion, and two or three sharp blows were struck, which cut off the silken trappings of the opposed shield; but at a word from the seniors the combatants smiled and desisted, the music struck up, and the dance movement began again.

CHAPTER XXV.

KOCHANES TO OROOMIAH.

July 26.—After many affectionate farewells we left the mountain valley, where we had made so pleasant and so interesting a sojourn, with regret. The Oroomia men were to return with us, the majority of them on foot, and the patriarch sent his cousin Johannan and several servants to escort us *causa honoris* over the first stage of the journey. We started at 8.30 down the valley, plunged down the steep hill into the ravine through which the torrent flows, and followed its downward course. The pass is a very fine one; the mountains lofty, the gorge between them narrow and rugged, leaving room only for the torrent, which chafes and foams over the rocks. The road is a mere track which scrambles round and over the rocks, and crosses from side to side of the stream, according to the nature of the ground. A handful of men could hold the pass against an army.

About noon we arrived at the valley of the Zab, into which the Kochanes Water runs; forded the river, which took the footmen up to the waist, and rested for half an hour under the trees till the caravan overtook us. Sliemôn the Jester was of the party; he asked one of his comrades to carry him over, who carried him to the middle and then pitched him over his head, and the valley rang with Homeric laughter, while Sliemôn floated down the rapid current and struggled for his life.

Then we left the valley of the Zab at once and began to ascend the steep side of another picturesque ravine. After

about an hour's stiff climbing reached the brow of the hill, and the village of Swawoota, and since the next village was seven or eight hours distant across the mountains, we resolved to spend the night here.

We halted under the shade of a magnificent old walnut-tree, where the people spread rugs for us, and the priest and chief villagers came to pay their respects to us; and we had some luncheon of milk and bread, and pipes and coffee, and finally lay down for a siesta. On waking we found our tent pitched on the brow of the hill, with a magnificent view before us. The ravine which we have ascended leads the eye to the opposite mountain of Tura Gelula, which forms a central point in the landscape, of bold and remarkable form, with the village of Sorenis on its shoulder. On the right we can see the valley of Kochanes, with the snow-streaked mountains behind it. On the left is the range of mountains up whose side we have climbed about half-way. The church of Swawoota, picturesquely perched on an isolated mass of rock, occupies the foreground. Altogether it is one of the finest and most striking landscapes we have seen. As evening drew on, three fires were lighted on the brow of the hill before our tents, and groups of people were busy about them—first cooking and then eating their evening meal; there were twenty people with us besides our own immediate party. Beyond the fires we looked down into the purple twilight of the darkening valley, and up to the outlines of the mountains against the sky. After supper all who considered that they had the *entrée* came into the tent, and we had some singing. One fine tune, from the service for the dead, I begged Mar Goriel to have translated for me, and I have already given it at page 227. In the night we had an alarm that a party of Koords were reconnoitring our camp, who, if they did not attack us, might try to steal some of the horses. We sent out a couple of scouts to gain information, and it took them half an hour to find out that it was our

katurjis, who had taken up their night quarters at some distance from us, who had caused the false alarm. Still, though it was a false alarm, it was an illustration of the state of insecurity in which these people live. Next day we learnt that a marauding party of Koords had actually been in the neighbourhood that night, and swept off the cattle of a neighbouring village.

Thursday, July 27.—A glorious morning. The early part of our journey lay along the mountain tops, with a wide view of valley and mountain around us. It is not possible to imagine the delight of riding across the mountains in the cool, pure, delicious, exhilarating mountain air. I can quite understand how it is that people who have breathed this air in youth, and been brought up among such scenery, and lived the free, wild life of mountaineers, pine in the air of cities, and amidst the scenes and restraints of civilised life. I feel sure that in all succeeding summers I shall call to mind the pure cool air of the Koordistan mountains, and long to be riding about their summits again.

After a morning spent among the mountains, we descended in the afternoon into the plain of Gawar. At the foot of the descent we had to ford a stream. The privileged Sliemôn asked the bishop to carry him across, and the bishop let him mount his shoulders, intending to repeat the trick of throwing him over, but this time the jester clung to the bishop so tightly that he got safely over, amidst universal merriment at his impudence.

The Gawar is a fertile level plain, like the filled up basin of a lake, about eighteen miles long from W. to E., and averaging six miles from N. to S. It is immediately surrounded by rounded hills, beyond which on the south lies a range of snow-streaked peaks, beyond which again lies the Mattran's country of Bishamisdin. There are about sixteen villages in the plain, and a fringe of them at the foot of the hills round it. We rode all afternoon across the plain. We

let the caravan continue its journey, while we halted at one of the villages ; they spread a rug for us to sit upon on the slope of the hill just outside, and the chief man brought us some sour milk, and others of the people came to look at us and to pay their respects. A few miles further is the village of Karpul, where a little cove of limestone rocks runs back into the sloping hillside, and from the very base of these rocks a dozen copious springs pour out their streams and unite into a little brook of pure cool water. It is as if one of the subterranean streams which are not unusual in the caverns of limestone hills, here found a crevice, by which it issued into open day. In the Peak of Derbyshire it would have been an interesting phenomenon and a pleasant scene, but one must travel in these hot and arid countries to appreciate the sense of delight with which one watches the cool, limpid water well forth, and drinks and drinks again. Ten miles further, and towards evening we reached Diza, where we were to pass the night. Diza is the capital of Gawar, has a bazaar, and is the residence of the kaimakam and station of the troops. We saw the white tents of the camp outside, and as we approached the village we met the kaimakam coming out with a wild-looking escort, some in Arab costume, with long slender spears, some in the modern uniform of the Turkish soldier ; he saluted us courteously as we passed one another.

We had here a specimen or two of Turkish customs. It seems that Diza is the frontier town between Turkey and Persia, and Persian passengers through it ought to pay some trifling fee for a permission. Many of our friends had taken other routes across the plain to avoid the exactions of the Government officials of Diza. The kaimakam held the bishop accountable for this, and demanded a fine from him. I counselled resistance, but the bishop made some compromise. Then the kaimakam accused him of conveying merchandise into the town, and secreting it in the house of Priest John to avoid the

customs dues. The bishop replied that the supposed merchandise was the personal baggage of the English travellers, and that so far from having been smuggled into the place, it happened that the caravan stood outside the gate, in full view of the officials and the townspeople, for a couple of hours, waiting till the travellers arrived. The kaimakam did not venture to meddle with us Englishmen. We hired fresh katurjis here to take us into Oroomiah, but we neglected to take the usual "fast-penny," and when the morning arrived, the katurjis had broken their engagement and taken themselves off, and we had to wait till another team could be engaged.

Friday, July 28.—Here our Kochanes friends, together with some of the Christians of Diza, accompanied us in a kind of procession to the outskirts of the town, and then took their final leave of us. When we had got half a mile on our journey a man came floundering across the country to intercept us. When he came up he invited me to take the horse he had brought. I thought it was because the horse I was on had cut some capers at starting, and it had been questioned whether it was safe to ride; but in the meantime I had had time to find out that I was well mounted and I did not care to change him; moreover, when the man took off his clumsy saddle, I saw that the new horse had a sore back. So I called the interpreter to tell the man I was satisfied with what I had. There ensued a loud wrangling between the two, and the interpreter told me—aside between two sentences—to ride on; so I quietly walked on. This produced a fresh explosion of loud talking, in the middle of which the interpreter called after me to push on; so I set off at a hand-gallop, and soon put a mile or two between myself and my follower. When the interpreter came up, I learnt that it was only a Turkish trick. The man wanted to exchange my good horse for a worse; it was then George told me to go on. Then the man declared that it was wanted for Government employ; it was then that the

interpreter gave me another hint, and I carried off the horse at a gallop, while George spiritedly told the fellow that there was nothing to prove that Government had requisitioned the horse, and that if he went after it the Englishman would not give it up. Then the man appealed to the winds, declaring the value of the horse to be 100 tomanauns (we knew that he had bought it that morning for eighteen), and that if the Koords carried it off he should demand that sum in payment for it. At the Nestorian village of Munbishoo was a church well built of hewn stone. We dismounted and sent for the key, and looked into it. In its general features and arrangement it very much resembled the Church of Kochanes. When we came out the people of the village had assembled, and kissed hands, and led us in a kind of procession through the village, and escorted us a short distance on our way. About noon we stopped at another Nestorian village, and were hospitably entertained by the chief man on bread hot from the oven and fried eggs, and yohoort and sour milk. We stopped again by a mill two or three hours further for the caravan to overtake us. The bishop lighted a fire, brought out his travelling kettle, and made us a good cup of tea. The caravan and footmen came up so late that we resolved to camp where we were for the night. A quarter of an hour brought us from the mill to the village. We took up our abode in the farmyard of one of the houses. The enclosure wall served to protect our horses and baggage. Everybody was tired, and it was now dark; we did not give them the trouble to pitch the tents, but they brought us out a couple of wooden bedsteads, on which we laid some rugs, and covering ourselves with our cloaks, slept in the open air.

Saturday, July 29.—Up before sunrise, and on our way an hour after. An hour or so brought us to the end of the valley, and we entered again into "the long windings of the hills," through which we wound for some hours, fording

a good-sized trout stream on the way, till we came out on the plain of Burados, a level space some six or seven miles across. Here we were to lunch at a Koord encampment, from whose chief we were to seek a safe-conduct across the dangerous border hills into Persia. We were received in a spacious black tent; our host was a stout, middle-aged man, who looked much more like a comfortable merchant of Aleppo or Diarbekr than the chief of a tribe of wild Koords. We found that he was a near relative of Ali Agha, and W. whispered to me, "What would he say if he knew of the letter you have in your pocket?" for at that very moment I had in my pocket a letter which I had written to the consul at Tabriz, detailing Mammé's raid on the village of Hozé, and asking him to obtain redress for the plundered villagers. After lunch two of the young fellows entertained us with a dance. It was of the kind in which a love story is represented in pantomime. It was not very entertaining. At the end of it the lover fell down on the ground before us as if dead. His companions lifted an arm, and it fell helplessly to the earth; then they lifted his head, and it fell back with a thud. It was intimated to me that the only charm which would bring him to life again was a piece of silver placed on his chest, and I placed a coin there, amidst the general approval. Still he did not stir, and when they attempted to lift him up, he fell back again with a heavier thump than before. It was whispered that the charm was not strong enough, so I added another silver piece, at whose touch he jumped up nimbly, and the performance concluded amidst applause and laughter.

By this time it was high time for us to resume our journey, and our host consented to send a couple of his people to see us safely over the mountain; for the hills on the frontier between Turkey and Persia are infested by bands of Koords who plunder caravans and travellers.

In the afternoon I fairly knocked up, and wished to stop

at a village which we saw a little off the line of march, but just then we came to a spring, and I drank and bathed my head and felt refreshed, and being assured that the village where friends expected us to stay for the night was only an hour further, I consented to go on. But it was very hard work. We horsemen pushed on ahead of the caravan and footmen. Sometimes I went at a snail's pace, for the heat was intolerable; then I pushed the horse into a gallop and overtook the others, and so on and on, and yet no signs of the village. At last when I had lagged behind my companions some distance I fairly gave in, got off my horse, and lay on the ground, waiting till some of the others should come up. My mouth and throat were perfectly dry and parched; my tongue felt like a bit of shrivelled leather. A small party of the footmen came up. They had no food and no water; but they assured me there was a spring a little further on, so I climbed on my horse again and went on with them. One of them had some lumps of sugar in his pocket, and I ate one and got a little moisture in my mouth by it. After riding another half hour I inquired again about the spring, and found that it was still miles ahead, so I dismounted again and lay down till the caravan should come up. But when at length it arrived Philippus had no water either, so I sent one of the men off on horseback to the spring to bring me water. By this time the sun was descending and the evening growing cooler. A little water and a few raisins and the coolness of the evening and the rest revived me, and I remounted and travelled on. An hour's descent brought us down to the plain of Oroomiah. We rode past a Koord village, but did not halt there. Another half hour in the dark, and we seemed to turn off the track into a field. One of the party suddenly fired a pistol-shot by way of signal, and after a little while men came to meet us. I was amused at the care suddenly bestowed upon me. A few hours ago I was lying half dead by the roadside alone; now one man took my bridle, two others

placed themselves one on each side of me. Every little watercourse we came to, and we had to cross several, my two henchmen held me carefully in my saddle as if I were a sack of wheat. At last we entered the village street of Genesa; a man at the corner lighted us with a lantern up a little alley. We found ourselves in the courtyard of a house; dismounted, and climbed up a ladder to our host's reception room. It was about three when we rose that morning; we had been on the road in the heat of a summer's sun all through the day, and now it was about ten at night. I may be pardoned if I confess that I could not help falling asleep as I sat in the midst of our friends waiting for supper to be served.

After supper we retired to sleep on the housetop. It was my first experience of this ancient Eastern custom. We had no bedstead surrounded with curtains like the people of Diarbekr, simply a mattress laid on the roof and a rug to cover us, with some neighbouring trees for our curtains, and the heavens full of brilliant stars for our canopy. The air was pleasantly cool, and we slept deliciously after our fatiguing day.

Sunday, July 30.—Being Sunday we rested where we were, and I excused myself from getting up before dawn to attend the Nestorian service in the neighbouring village church. Our host must be a man of substance, for his house was large (by comparison) and partly of two stories. The reception-room on the upper floor was a good-sized room, with some decoration. On descending (by ladders like those at Kochanes) into the courtyard we caught a glimpse of the kitchen, and of the ladies of the house, busied in their preparations for the entertainment of so large a party. We spent a good part of the day under the shade of the trees in our host's orchard, carpets being spread on the ground for us to sit upon; and some of the people of this and of neighbouring villages came to visit us.

Monday, July 31.—We had a six-hours' ride before us

into the city of Oroomiah, and did not start till late, in order, as I afterwards found, to give time for the arrangements which our friends had made for our reception. A few horsemen rode out to Genesa before we started to escort us into the city. Soon after we had started others met us ; and all along the road at intervals other parties met us from Oroomiah, or joined us from the villages. They would dash up at a gallop, fling themselves off their horses, kiss hands, remount again, and join our procession. The more dashing spirits amused themselves after the Persian fashion, by careering at full gallop over the fields, pursuing one another, and imitating military exercises. Before we reached the outskirts of the city our little party had grown into a cavalcade of a couple of hundred horsemen.

Acting on the advice of my friends, who knew the customs of the country, we had sent forward the previous day a letter of introduction which the Persian ambassador in London, at the Archbishop's request, had given me to the governor of Oroomiah, and the governor honoured us, very unexpectedly to me, with a public reception. A little way outside the town we were met by the son of the acting-governor, the son of the chief military officer, and the brother of the Serparast (governor of the Christians). The governor had sent two caparisoned horses to be led before us ; the Serparast had sent his chief servant, who rode immediately before us, and half a dozen kavasses, who marched before us to clear the way. We formed a kind of procession—the servants in front, the officials on each side, and our Nestorian cavalcade behind us. Crowds of people lined the road to see us. The Nestorians of course mustered in full strength ; the Jews formed a separate group on a little elevation by the roadside ; the Mussulmans had come as people will come to see a sight. A nomenclator posted himself at my elbow to tell me who everybody was, and with whom I was to shake hands and to whom I was to bow. It would have been much more amusing if it had

not been that the heat was intense and the dust stifling. But I rejoiced greatly that the reception constituted a very important event for my Nestorian friends. They are habitually despised and oppressed by the Mussulmans; their bishops and chiefs are "snubbed" by the officials; it will be remembered that the Serparast had threatened with fine and imprisonment those who, at the patriarch's invitation, should come to Kochanes to meet me. They had been afraid to return except under my protection. It was therefore a great demonstration for the Nestorians. We two Englishmen formed the centre of the procession with a Nestorian bishop on each side of us; and there were a couple of hundred of Nestorians on horseback, and how many on foot I do not know, in our train; and instead of slinking in by the bye-ways, in fear of fine, imprisonment, and beating, the officials of the city had come out to receive their English friends, and they perforce were permitted to share the honours bestowed upon us. The demonstration meant to the actors in and spectators of it that the Church of England was interested in the well-being of the Nestorians, and that Persia received the representatives of the English Church with public honours, and must henceforth regard the Nestorians as having powerful friends.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE CITY OF OROOMIAH.

THE governor had directed that apartments should be prepared for us in the empty palace of the ex-governor; we were conducted to it, a guard of honour at the gate presented arms, the official gentlemen installed us in our apartments, and then left us to our repose.

It was a large building of two quadrangles and a garden beyond. Two large rooms had been furnished for us; the two Nestorian bishops took up their residence with us, *causâ honoris*, and we had to mount an establishment. First were the guard of soldiers at the gate, whom we had to pay and feed, or give them money to provide themselves with food; we adopted the latter alternative. Then there were four kavasses, with whom we had to make a similar arrangement. There was a respectable Mussulman in charge of the palace, who was condescendingly polite to us; the Serparast had sent us a servant, a sleek, well-drilled person, with henna-stained fingers, who served sherbet, coffee, and pipes to our numerous visitors. We had our cook, Philippus, and we engaged two other servants, acting always on the advice of our Nestorian friends.

Here we stayed four days, receiving a constant succession of visitors. The gentlemen of the American Mission were among the foremost, who renewed personally the offer they kindly sent us by letter as we approached the city, to put their town-house at our disposal. The Serparast also honoured us with an early visit. I have not yet described his office.

In reply to the constant complaints of the Christians of their oppression, the Shah's Government has appointed a special officer, under whose rule and protection Christian subjects in Oroomiah are placed. The present Serparast has very recently been sent from Teheran. He is an Armenian, a gentleman-like person, who was one of the Persian Commissioners at the Vienna Industrial Exhibition of 1875. Since he speaks French, we were able to communicate directly. His Excellency made some very polite speeches, after the Persian fashion, expressing his gratification at my visit, and so forth, to which I made an elaborate speech in reply; I concluded by saying that the honours with which I had been received and his present expressions of politeness were the more gratifying because I had understood that he had interposed to prevent my Nestorian friends from coming to Kochanes, at the patriarch's invitation, to welcome me. The Serparast said that was easily explained; it was harvest time, and it was undesirable, &c., &c. I listened gravely; it seemed to me a very lame apology, but it was an apology; I thanked him for giving me an explanation, and said that I concluded that now, at least, the authorities would find no fault with the Nestorians for coming to meet me. We had visitors of all kinds, Nestorians, of course, in abundance—their chief men, and deputations from their villages; Mussulmans, Armenians, Roman Catholics; and a large deputation of Jews, who came to tell us their grievances.

The heat is very great; this is the hottest month here, and the season is exceptionally hot. After the first night we slept no more in-doors, but had our mattresses laid on the pavement of the courtyard, and slept *sub Jove*.

Wednesday, August 2.—In the morning paid a visit to the bazaars. Returned, at their room in the khan, the visit of some Armenian merchants who had paid us a visit the previous day; they gave us coffee, and presented us with a tray of sweetmeats. In the afternoon returned the Serparast's visit in state, first sending to ask when he

would receive us, and going with two soldiers, two kavasses, the two Nestorian bishops, and a servant. Coffee and cigarettes, and gossip; was amused at the Serparast's solicitude about our health, telling us what to eat, drink, and avoid; above all, to eat no fruit. Receiving visits all the rest of the day.

Thursday, August 3.—In the morning received visits. In the evening paid a visit to the garden of the Shahzadah (the Shah's son, the governor of the city), on the invitation of his chief gardener, who is a Nestorian. The garden is very inferior to our English gardens. It was a large level plot of ground, part vineyard, part orchard, with shrubs and roses planted along the walks. There are two large summer-houses. We were very hospitably entertained with raki, tea, and fruit, and passed a couple of hours pleasantly.

This morning I rose very early and found that the water, which is running across the court all day long, into the tank and out of it again, was not running, and its channels were green with slime, and exhaling, I have no doubt, malaria. This accounted for the fact that I had been feverish, and W. had to-day a very sharp attack of fever and ague. We made arrangements to go out to Seir for a few days and camp on the hills there; and that night we had our mattresses removed to the housetop, where the air was likely to be purer.

Friday, August 4.—Removed to Seir, a small village on the hill-side, about six miles from the city. The American missionaries have a good house here, which, being surrounded by a wall, with a view to protection from the Koords, is called the Castle. We pitched our tents a few hundred yards outside the village. We commanded a fine view of the wooded plain and the distant lake, surrounded by mountains; the area of the plain is picturesquely broken by the projection of the spurs of the mountains into it; and there is a fine group of hills in the middle of the plain

called the Bizoudari—the calf mountain ; altogether the view was an unusually grand one.

The effect of the fresher, purer air was at once perceptible, and the medical member of the American Mission kindly took our invalid in hand.

Saturday, August 5.—We rested in the shade of our tents, and nursed our health, and feasted our eyes on the view, and improved our knowledge of things Oroomian by chatting with the two bishops, who had come up to Seir with us, clearly regarding it as part of the honour and kindness they desired to show us that some of their chief people should always be with us.

Just below our tents was the threshing-floor of the village, and we had the opportunity of studying the whole economy. The tenants pay their rent in kind, not a fixed amount, but a proportion of the corn crop, usually, I believe, a third. The landlord is secured against dishonesty in the transaction by the law that the corn must be threshed out on his floor. Accordingly we see the people bringing their parcels of wheat on rude, wheelless sledges drawn by oxen and buffaloes, and stacking them in separate heaps around the floor. Every man's corn is threshed in its turn. The process goes on "from morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve." The floor is strewn with a thick layer of sheaves ; two buffaloes drag round and round over it a heavy beam, into which a multitude of flints are inserted ; both ear and straw are thus cut up into chaff, and the feet of the beasts help to tread the corn out of the husk. Then men with broad wooden shovels throw the chaff up against the wind, the heavy corn falls into one heap, and the lighter straw and husks fall into a second heap close by. A servant of the landlord is on the watch day and night. A little look-out is erected for him, consisting of four poles thrust into the ground, which carry a floor about eight feet high and a roof six feet above that ; the sides and roof are loosely

fenced with leafy boughs to keep off the sun, but leave interstices through which the watchman can see all round.* The landlord's steward comes frequently to take his master's share of the grain.

To sit in front of our tents and watch all this going on in the foreground, with the plain and mountains and distant lake for a back ground, is like a realisation of a Georgic of Virgil.

I may speak here of some other implements which have interested me by their primitive forms. The plough is just like that we see represented in the illuminations of our Saxon MSS. The spade also is of the same primitive fashion; both handle and blade are carved out of one piece of wood; the blade small, rounded at the bottom and shod with iron, with a cross piece of wood a little above the blade for the foot to tread upon. Saxon Bible illuminations of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise, illustrating the truth that then "Adam delved and Eve span," put into Adam's hand a spade of exactly the same shape; and the women here go about twirling a spindle, just like that which the Saxon artist has put into the hands of Eve.

Our neighbours, the American missionaries, invited us to their house, and kind Mrs. Cochrane, the widow of one of the old missionaries, who still lives here with her daughter, sent little delicacies to our invalid. Let me say here that the American missionaries with whom we came in contact, both at Beyrout, Wan, and Seir, though they could hardly help, I suppose, regarding us as formidable rivals come to trouble their work, showed us great courtesy and kindness, both at Wan and Oroomiah inviting us to take up our residence with them.

Sunday, August 6.—Mar Goriel went into the city to

* A similar hut is erected for a watchman in the vineyards and melon gardens when the fruit is ripe, a "lodge in a garden of cucumbers" (Isa. i. 8).

celebrate Divine service, and I rode in with him. The service was conducted as I had already seen it at Kochanes, except that the singing was of better quality. The bishop, standing on the chancel steps, preached a short sermon. I could not understand a word of it, but it was easy to see that the address was an eloquent one; the preacher was earnest and impressive in manner, and long before he had concluded men were shading their faces with their hands, and sobs and smothered exclamations were heard from the women. The church seems an old one, built of stone, pleasantly situated in an enclosed churchyard planted with trees. The plan of the church is like that at Kochanes, with these additions: At the west end is a kind of transept, whose limbs form chapels, in which are placed two handsome tombs of two recent bishops of the line which is called by the dynastic name of Mar Johannan. At the east end of the nave is a low screen wall, about four feet in advance of the wall which divides the sacrarium from the body of the church. Towards the north end of this screen an embrasure is cut into the wall, where the deacon stands to administer the chalice, while the priest administers the bread from the chancel step. We lingered a little in the churchyard and were introduced to the people; some of the younger women were very nicely dressed, and I was pleased with the appearance and manners of the people.

There is another ancient church in the city converted into a mosque, but I did not know of its existence till we had left Oroomiah, and I did not therefore see it.

After service we went to the house of Khooda Verdi, who had invited us to dinner. All the trades here are organised into guilds, and have their officers, as with us in the Middle Ages, and our host is the head of the carpenters' guild. His house I take to be a fair example of the houses of the fairly well-to-do citizens. Out of the hot, dusty, dirty lane of the Christian quarter, we entered through

a passage into a courtyard surrounded by buildings—the stable, the workshop, the offices—but planted like a garden. We crossed this into another quadrangle planted still more prettily as a garden, and surrounded by the living rooms. On the further side is the reception-room on the right, and the kitchen on the left, divided by the corridor, which runs through to another garden at the back of the house. I was glad to see so nice a house, everything in excellent order, the garden giving evidence of loving care, and everything wearing an air of substantial comfort. There was a large company assembled to meet us, and our host entertained us very handsomely. Of course it was interesting to us to see the order of a Persian dinner. The cloth was spread on the floor in the middle of the room; the attendants were two young men, probably the apprentices or journeymen of our host, waiting upon their master and his guests as they used to do with us in England. It was curious to see them walking over the table-cloth with their bare feet in the execution of their duties. Next, the flat oval loaves of native bread were laid all round the edge of the table-cloth, then the dishes were placed on the table, platters of pillaff, pillaff with the members of a fowl ready carved and laid on the top of the rice, bowls containing pieces of boiled mutton swimming in its broth, pickles, &c. All being ready the company squatted round the table-cloth, the bishop said a long grace, and we fell to with a good appetite. It is the custom to begin with a small glass of raki, just as in remote parts of the country in England an old-school farmer will still ask you to have a glass of spirits before dinner. Some half-hour after dinner dessert was served, consisting of grapes, water-melons, musk-melons, apricots, &c. The fruit in Oroomiah is very fine and abundant. We had a good deal of interesting conversation with our friends. The son of the host, Serghées by name, married to the daughter of Dr. Yussuf, is a fine, intelligent young fellow, full of ingenuity

and enterprise in his business, and a favourite with the Shahzadah ; through him we learnt to read the feelings of the young men in these countries with respect to the way in which they are treated by the Mussulmans. Things have mended of late years, but time was, not long since, when, if a Christian riding through the street met a Mussulman, he must dismount on pain of being horsewhipped on the spot by the man of the conquering race, indignant that a Christian dog should presume to remain mounted in his august presence, and this fiercely contemptuous feeling has by no means died out. An indication of the comparative estimate of the two races is to be seen in the "blood-money" assigned to individuals ; the blood-money is the customary fine which a man-slayer must pay to the nearest relatives of the slain man* ; for a Mussulman it is 1,000 tomauns (£500), for a Christian 300 tomauns (£150). We had an illustration also of the course of justice in these countries. One of the guests present at dinner—an old Nestorian—was the hero of the story. Some months ago he had a quarrel with a woman, and in his passion struck her with his stick ; she had her child in her arms, and it fell to the ground, and its death shortly after was attributed to this assault. He was brought before the authorities on a charge of murder ; but on payment of a certain sum to the woman, and a backshish to the Serparast, he was acquitted, and there the affair ought to have ended. But when our friend the new Serparast came into office this old story was revived ; our Nestorian was sent for and sent to prison. On Saturday the Serparast sent for him, and told him, to-morrow being Sunday, he might go, but he should require him to appear before him again on Monday morning. As he left, one of the Serparast's people intimated to him that if, when he came on Monday, he brought a backshish of about fifteen tomauns he would probably be dismissed again.

* So in the days of our Saxon forefathers every man had his "bot" according to his rank.

I looked on our old friend, sitting at dinner with a very desponding look, as a great curiosity. He was not disposed to give way: "If I have committed murder let me be tried and punished; but I will not have the charge held over my head and made the means of fleecing me whenever the Serparast wants a little money." It seems to me that the law is systematically used here as an instrument of oppression. If an official can once catch you tripping, he gets his hook in your nose, and treats you like a milch cow; so that the people are exceedingly cautious in all they do to avoid giving any one a hold upon them.

"Why don't you appeal to his superior?" said I in my innocence. "Because I should have to give him a still larger backshish for a decision in my favour." The higher the official, the greater the backshish; and they all are said to have their price, from the Shah (who received a backshish from the Pope the other day as the price of certain privileges and favours to the Papal emissaries in Persia) down to the lowest *employé* of the Government.

We had a pleasant ride back to our tents in the cool of the evening. We found there a state of excitement. A large body of Koords, as many as 2,000 or 3,000, they say, are in the neighbourhood plundering the villages. The city itself is not free from alarm, for last year when the Koords were plundering the plain, the city people got troops sent against them, who, they say, perpetrated great cruelties, such as killing a woman, tossing a child into a boiling cauldron, &c.; the citizens now naturally fear the revenge of the Koords. The village of Seir had been in a state of alarm all day.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE PLAIN OF OROOMIAH—MAR GORIEL'S VILLAGES.

THE plain of Oroomiah, stretching about fifty miles north and south, and the salt lake which borders it on the east, are set in a frame of mountains, on some of which patches and lines of snow are still remaining in the middle of August. The plain is very fertile, well-watered and well-wooded; it is very beautiful now, and in spring must deserve its name of "the Paradise of Persia." It is thickly dotted over with more than 1,000 villages, of which 104 are inhabited by Nestorians.

Monday, August 7.—The three rivers which rise in the mountains, water the plain, and discharge their waters into the lake, are called the Nahra-mdeemita (city river), the Barandizd, and the Nazlu-chai. These rivers define the jurisdictions of the three bishops. Each takes the Nestorian villages watered by one of the rivers. I started this morning to accompany Mar Goriel through his country watered by the Barandizd, and to stay with him at his village of Ardishai. Dr. Yussuf, brother of the late, and uncle of the present, Bishop Yohannan, and one or two others came up from the city to accompany us. It was a pleasant ride, in spite of the great heat, across the plain. At noon we reached the village of Dizatika, where it had been arranged that we were to dine with a Mussulman, the owner of a moiety of the village. The Nestorian population of the village came out to meet us, and escorted us in a sort of procession to the house of our host. I found that there was a good deal of dissatis-

faction at our going to dine with a Mussulman, one of the chief Nestorians having desired to entertain us. I explained that for my part I would rather be the guest of a Christian, but that I was entirely in the bishop's hands, and suggested that no doubt he had thought it politic to accept the courtesy offered by the Bey. We ascended to the reception-room on the upper floor, where dinner was served. Our host was courteous, but seemed a little pre-occupied, for which he certainly had sufficient excuse, for at intervals well-armed scouts came in to report the doings of a large body of Koords who were in the immediate neighbourhood, and who, it was thought, might attack the village. Our host had to take into consideration what he should do in that case; either flee and leave his house and village to be plundered, or resolve to defend his property, and perhaps die fighting on his threshold. Soon after dinner we took our leave—I was glad to hear afterwards that the Koords did not come near the village—and resumed our journey. Our journey soon began to assume the character of a progress. Additional friends joined us from various villages. Every Nestorian village we came to the people came out to meet us; first the children, then a little further on the mass of the people, and lastly the principal people, some on foot, some on horseback. We had to stop to receive their greetings, which were very eager and hearty; for they looked upon our coming as a pledge of English countenance and aid, and the commencement of a new and better future. They conducted us through the village, and a little distance beyond, and then took their leave. From village to village our road lay sometimes through enclosed lanes, but more frequently by bridle roads across the fields. Our escort, which grew in numbers continually, amused themselves, Persian fashion, by careering round the fields and "showing off" their horsemanship. One retired captain of cavalry entered into the amusement with great enthusiasm, and was evidently

gratified by the interest with which we watched his feats. The enthusiasm was contagious ; my horse was young and mettlesome, and I soon found myself prancing about with the rest. When we got out of the fields into the lanes the eagerness of horses and riders was not to be checked instantly, and we raced along them in such sort that more than once we nearly ran into a deputation waiting by the roadside to receive us.

At several villages the deputations brought us bunches of grapes for our refreshment. In Oroomiah they pay great attention to the cultivation of the vine ; they say that they have more than a hundred different kinds of grapes on the plain ; and that some of the bunches grow so large, that to carry one from the vineyard without brushing off the bloom needs, like the grapes of Eshcol, a staff borne by two men. They throw up the soil of the vineyard into ridges, the vine is planted in the side of the ridge and trained over the surface, the grapes lying on the ground, while water is conveyed by a system of irrigation into the intermediate furrows.*

The Mussulmans do not drink wine, and the Government forbids its sale in the bazaars. The Christian proprietors make it for their own consumption ; but all that we tasted was of the most inferior quality. Great quantities of grapes are eaten in the season, but the bulk of the grape harvest is converted into raisins and exported, chiefly to Russia.

At one village there was a curious ceremony. Several men were stationed at the roadside with a lamb, which, as we approached, they laid on its back, and one of the men held his knife as if to kill it in our honour. I suppose it was an offering of the materials for a feast, if we chose to

* It was curious to see the different ways of cultivating the vine in the different countries we passed through. In some parts of Italy the boughs of neighbouring vines are tied together into rude arches for mutual support ; in other parts elms are planted in rows for the vines to climb up. In France and Germany the vines are pruned like currant bushes.

accept it. We were told what was right to do—to thank them for the honour and beg that the lamb might not be killed, and to give them a backshish.

At the village of Takia we stopped at the house of Kasha Shalita, the priest of the village, who had been one of the Oroomians who came to us to Kochanes, where he entertained us to tea in the orchard. Under the shade of two of the trees carpets were spread, and we all took our places; the people of the village came to pay their respects to their bishop and his English visitors. Shalita showed us an ancient Syriac copy of the Gospels (?) which he possessed, and with which he had no disposition to part.

As we approached the bishop's village of Ardishai we found that the people had prepared us a grand reception. First the mass of the people met us in the field outside the village, the women also lining the way and pressing forward to kiss hands. Then we advanced towards a large group of the elders of the village, who also kissed hands and bade us welcome. While this was going on our horsemen were careering about the field, some of them firing off their guns. When the salutations were ended the villagers formed a procession in advance of us; our horsemen formed in order after us, the bishop and I occupying the centre; and so we advanced towards the village. A little further another group joined us. The sexton took his place at the head of the procession ringing a hand-bell; a thurifer went immediately before us swinging his censer; and lastly the village choir chanted a psalm of welcome; and so they conducted us in a kind of religious procession through the streets to the bishop's house. The style of reception was a little startling, but the scene was very picturesque, and interested me very much. When we got into the bishop's house I begged him to say a few words of thanks, from the flat roof, to the people who still crowded the street. We had mounted by a ladder from the courtyard to this roof, another short ladder gave us

access to the roof of a still higher building, and in the middle of this higher roof the bishop's reception-room had been erected, with a verandah on one side; a kind of drawbridge connected this with another room on the other side of the court. A plentiful supper concluded the evening, and I was glad to get early to bed.



A NESTORIAN BISHOP AND TWO PRIESTS OF OROOMIAH.

I take this opportunity of introducing the Aboona Mar Goriel (the Bishop Lord Gabriel) to the reader in the accompanying woodcut. He is the fifteenth Mar Goriel of his family. The Bishop does not adopt the modern Persian costume, but retains what, I suppose, is the ancient Persian fashion. The priest on his right hand is the Kasha Shalita

above mentioned. The priest on his left is Kasha Yonan, another of the Oroomian clergy.

Tuesday, August 8.—I was up early, and paid a visit to the three churches of the town before breakfast. One is a modern church built by subscriptions which were raised by the former American missionaries; I understood on the spot that the present American missionaries claim it in consequence as their own; I was, however, told by the American missionaries that they do not claim any property in it, but that, like all the other churches, it belongs to the people. The second church has been recently built by the French Papists, and when we looked in a service was going on. The third is the ancient church of the village, lying in ruins, but with several handsome tombs of the bishops in the church and churchyard; the present bishop has set his heart on restoring it, and I heartily wish him success.

After breakfast the bishop had arranged an excursion to the lake for our entertainment. Three carriages-and-four waited at his door to receive the party. The "carriages" were the great, heavy, rough drays on which the wheat is carried from the field to the threshing-floor; the wheels are formed of several pieces of wood fastened together into a solid wheel, perhaps four feet diameter and two feet thick. They had put polés at the corners, and rigged up a curtain to screen us from the sun, and some rugs were spread for us to recline upon. The "four" were draught buffaloes, which are driven without reins. The driver of the shaft-cattle stands in front of the dray, with a huge whip with a leather thong, which he uses very freely; a lad sits on the yoke which is fixed to the horns of the leaders, facing backwards, and keeping up a monotonous chant, without which the cattle would not work. After a great deal of fun we were all packed into the carriages, and started through the village. Now the right wheel was in the narrow road, and the other on the

bank which bounded it on the left ; in another minute the left wheel was in the road, and the right wheel in the ditch which bounded it on the right, and so we lurched along till we cleared the town. Just outside were the threshing-floors. Piles of wheat were heaped up all about, and on three or four floors the oxen were dragging the rude threshing-machines round and round over the layers of wheaten straw. Beyond this we came on the broad margin of the lake—a salt marsh, dry with the summer heat and hoary with the crusted salt. Here the drivers of the two carriages took to racing, urging on their weird-looking cattle with whip and voice ; the buffaloes went at a fairly fast pace, and the huge unwieldy drays lurched along, with their clumsy wheels nearly up to the axle in the yielding soil, and we were tossed helplessly to and fro. It was a Titanic chariot race ; I never saw anything so wildly grotesque. At length we reached the waters of the lake, but they still drove on a considerable distance through the shallow water until we stood still, surrounded by the still, gleaming lake. I found that part of the entertainment was that we should all bathe, so I fell in with the humour of the occasion, and presently there we were, bishop, priests, and layman, old men and young, all most decorously furnished with a towel or a handkerchief, or a something, round the loins, striding and splashing along towards the deeper water. The water is intensely salt, as is soon discovered if the swimmer is careless enough to get it into his mouth, or, still worse, into his eyes ; and it is consequently extremely buoyant, it seemed as if one's feet never would sink to the ground again. After we had re-dressed, our friends brought out a store of cucumbers, water-melons, and grapes, with which we refreshed ourselves, and then lumbered back again into the town.

After dinner we started to the village of Guktapa, to the house of Malek Yohnan, who had invited us to dine and spend the night with him. His house is one of the

best we have seen; the large courtyard is turned into a blooming garden; the kitchens and offices are on the near side, the reception-rooms on the other side; a long verandah in front of the reception-rooms is covered with a vine, from which very large branches of grapes, not yet quite ripe, hang temptingly. Under this verandah rugs were spread for us to recline upon, and fruit and tea were served. We attended evening service at the village church; the ordinary service was followed by a short sermon and extempore prayer. We supped under the vine-covered verandah, with lights formed of a candle placed within an ornamental paper lantern. The effect was very pretty. We had during the evening a good deal of conversation on the doctrines and customs of the Church of England. I was surrounded here by the scholars of the former American missionaries; our host had been one of their preachers and teachers for many years. Their questions showed a considerable intelligence and knowledge of the subject; and I had for interpreter the most literary of the Persian Nestorians, who, having been employed to translate American religious works into Syriac, was well qualified to interpret between us. From the intelligence with which the questions were interpreted to me in English I inferred that my answers would be conveyed with equal accuracy into Syriac; and where there was any shade of meaning which I was anxious to have conveyed with precision I took pains to ascertain first that my friend perfectly understood the point himself. He was in the employment of the American mission, but I had no doubt of the *bonâ fides* of his intervention.*

* It may very likely occur to some reader to ask, Did I fairly represent the history, doctrines, and customs of the Church of England to the Nestorians? I may reply that I had quite recently written a sketch of English Church History, and a sketch of Some Chief Truths of Religion, which were published by the Christian Knowledge Society. If the reader takes sufficient interest in the matter, he can procure these books and ascertain from them what views were put before the Nestorians as those of the English Church.

Our host's family seems to have been long one of the leading families among the Persian Nestorians. He told me that his ancestor came with a large following down from the mountains and settled here; that the head of the family was recognised by successive Shahs as the malek of the Nestorians, and he showed me documents with the seals of several Shahs recognising them in that capacity. In recent times his office has been shorn of some of its scope and prestige by the appointment of two other maleks, each presiding over a section of the people.

Wednesday, August 9.—When I woke soon after sunrise I found that the rest of the party had gone to morning prayer. After breakfast we started homewards—i.e., towards our tents at Seir; a number of our friends accompanied us a considerable distance, *causâ honoris*. Just outside the village of Guktapa, on the hill which forms the cemetery of the village, we saw a new school just built by the Americans; it was a nice convenient-looking building, and cost only 100 tomauns (£50). Our road led us along the bank of the river outside the city, and past some of the pleasant suburban houses in which the Government officers and other well-to-do people live during the summer months. Here our Guktapa and Oroomiah friends said good-bye, leaving a very small party of us to return to Seir. My horse had been fidgeting and dancing all the way hitherto; I gave him his head now, and we galloped the rest of the way, up hill and down dale, till we rode into camp, just in time for dinner.

Found W. better; but he had his tale of adventure during our absence, which I insert in his own words in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SEIR.

“My father, with the Nestorian bishop, &c., had gone to spend a couple of days in visiting some of Mar Goriel’s villages, and it was thought better that I, who had been suffering rather severely from fever and ague, and was unfit for exposure to the sun of the plain, should remain at the camp with the cook—Philip. For the last week or so there had been reports of serious depredations of the Koords, and since we had been at Seir we had been able almost every evening to hear firing of guns, and dogs barking in the distance. I do not think these alarms gave us any great inconvenience in the way of fright; for my part I never seemed to realise the idea that we might be attacked any night by 500 or 1,000 armed Koords, who would walk off with all our effects, and perhaps cut our throats into the bargain. This view of the case never occurred to me. I saw and heard that the villagers around us were frequently despoiled of their cattle and goods, and in a great many cases of their lives, and I pitied the helpless sufferers who were thus ruthlessly robbed, and would have helped them if I could; but somehow it never struck me that we might be in the same plight. We were armed certainly; but what could two or three men, even though these men were Englishmen, do against a thousand Koords, who are also armed to the teeth, and have a law amongst themselves that if any one of them is killed, his nearest relative must revenge his death. I never even quite made up my mind how I should act in case of an

attack—whether to fire away and kill as many as possible before I was myself killed, or whether to stand calmly by and allow them to rob anything and everything, and take my chance for my life. I believe the latter would have been the wisest course if they had been in any force. If there had only been one or two of them, I think, with our superior weapons, they would have stood a poor chance.

“Well, to return: I was left in the tent with the cook only. I had been for a short ride in the afternoon, and when I came back the cook met me, and told me that there had been a good deal of excitement in the village that afternoon, owing to rumours of the Koords being in the neighbourhood in considerable force. Upon this information I went to the house of our interpreter, who was a native of this village, and was at the time ill in bed. I asked him what he thought about the matter; was there any immediate danger to us? He said that he did not think they would attack the village, as it was only a very small one, and there would not be much to be gained by it, though they might attempt to drive off the flocks from the neighbouring pasturage, as there were a good many beasts at that time feeding there, which had been increased by the remnants of flocks which the Koords had already despoiled. He advised me to take my gun and rifle to the tent with me, which I had left at his house to be cleaned, &c., and promised to send me two men in the evening to keep guard outside the tent, and give me warning should there be any danger. With this I was perfectly satisfied, and, having given the guns to the servant to carry to the tent, strolled back with him and ate my dinner without any further thought about the matter; but just as I had got fairly into my first pipe after dinner, two men came running up to the tent in great excitement, shouting something about Koords which I did not understand; but when they came up, I was informed that the Koords were coming upon us in great force. The cook rushed up to

me, and entreated me to run for it; but when I asked him where we were to run to, he did not seem quite clear on the point himself; all he cared for was to run somewhere. I in vain attempted to point out to him that we were just as likely to run towards them as away from them (as our informants did not know from which quarter they would approach us). He still entreated me either to run away somewhere, or to hide, or do something equally silly. I refused, of course, to do anything of the kind, and tried to pacify him by showing him that I had a revolver in my pocket, a double-barrel gun, and a Westley Henry's rifle, with which latter I assured him that I could kill at least twenty men in a minute at a thousand yards distance! This information seemed somewhat to comfort him, and he even showed an inclination to handle the gun himself, but I informed him that if it came to firing, his part of the business would be to load as fast as he could (which, by the way, he could not have done at all, as a breech-loading gun was to him an unfathomable mystery) and hand it to me to fire, as, from all accounts of desperate resistance that I have ever read, this always seemed the correct programme. At this stage of the proceedings one of the American missionaries, who have their summer residence in this village, came out to me, and very kindly offered me a bed in their house, thinking that I should be safer there, as they knew that my father had gone down into the plain, and that I was therefore alone.

“As our baggage was a great deal too heavy to remove at that time of night (it was about eleven o'clock by this time), and as if it did come to plundering I should at least like to superintend the transaction, I declined this courteous offer.

“Our interpreter had sent me two men to keep watch, as he had promised, and they seemed to take the affair very coolly, and my cook also had quite regained his usual composure; in fact he was inclined to joke about the affair, and

took to imitating the cries and gesticulations of the men who had thus alarmed us all. Affairs having arrived at this satisfactory point, I, being very weak and feverish, thought a little sleep would be a pleasant diversion, and accordingly, having seen that my guards were in their proper places, turned into the tent, and, having placed my revolver under my head, the gun on one side of me and the rifle on the other, lay down to try to get a little rest. For some time I was kept awake by the reports of rifles and guns, which I could hear distinctly, and which seemed to be not very far off. After a short time, however, I fell asleep, and did not wake again until the morning, when a sad tale awaited me. It seemed that the following were the events which had caused us our alarm of the previous evening.

“Two tribes of the Koords had for a long time past been at daggers drawn with each other, and they had arranged to fight it out on this particular night. They were to meet in the plain at a certain place, which happened to be very near to us, and there to settle their long standing differences.

“One of these tribes had to pass through the village next to ours to gain the appointed battle-field, and on their way they stopped at this village, and ordered the villagers to provide them with dinner. This the trembling villagers did, thinking themselves very lucky if they could get off so easily. The Koords, having eaten and drunk their fill, started off right merrily to meet their foes; but they were beaten and driven back with considerable loss. Accordingly, when they arrived at the village on their way back to the mountains, they were not in very good temper, and this the poor villagers were made to feel ere long, for, having again eaten and drunk as much as they could obtain, they began to feel in the humour for plunder. The first house which they attempted to rob was that of the deacon. He, very naturally, barred the door against them, and when they had smashed this in, himself stood in their way, and

tried to protect his home from desolation and ruin. This show of resistance exasperated the fierce Koords, and they cruelly butchered the poor priest on his own threshold. Like tigers, having tasted blood, their appetites were whetted for slaughter, and they proceeded to plunder in all directions; but most of the people knew what to expect if they stopped to protect their hearths, and made their escape in good time. The Koords then burnt the village, drove off the flocks and horses, and retired to the mountains, no doubt much comforted after their recent defeat by this little indulgence in the art of robbery, arson, and murder.

“One poor Koordish woman, who had married a Nestorian, was trying to escape with her husband, and did get some distance from the scene of slaughter, but beginning to get tired with her rapid flight, she lagged some distance behind her husband. As she was walking along, one of the Koords suddenly jumped out from behind and stabbed her with his hanjiar in the back; she uttered a loud scream, which brought her husband to her aid. She was not badly wounded, and managed to get on again. After she had gone a little further, the same man sprang upon her again, and inflicted two more wounds in her back, this time much more serious wounds. Her husband, however, managed to get her into our village, and I was told that she was then in some tents which were just below our own encampment.

“I went down to the tents in the morning with the brother of our interpreter, but when we passed them they told us that the poor woman had died half an hour previously.

“This cowardly assassination was probably perpetrated by one of her own relations, who would think it a meritorious action to kill her, as she had married a Christian and forsaken her tribe.”

While we were sitting “in the tent door” after dinner

enjoying the view over plain and lake and mountain, a number of men came and sat in a circle before us; and one of their number told us their tale, which was only a more precise version of the events detailed in the previous page. They were men of the neighbouring villages of Ombi and Tulla. On Thursday last a body of Koords, headed by the chiefs Ali Agha and Ali Paha, of the Sedanaii tribe of the Harki nation, came to their villages and stayed till the following day, on their way to encounter Ali Khan, of the tribe of Shekaki; they were hospitably received, and left on Friday in search of their enemies. The two bodies of Koords met, and the Harki men were beaten. On their return, they came to the villages again on Sunday morning, and were again entertained and fed. But before leaving they began to plunder the place. Shamasha Yakoob, a Nestorian deacon, of whom the American missionaries speak very highly, shut his door against them, but a shot, fired through the door, wounded him; and, having burst the door open, they stabbed him to death with their hanjars on his own threshold. Their blood thus heated, they proceeded to sack the town, but the rest of the inhabitants had fled before them. They carried off flocks, herds, and household goods. The following schedule was given me as a correct statement of their losses:—3,253 sheep, 100 oxen and cows, 36 buffaloes, 25 asses, 4 horses, 9 guns, &c.

The object of the visit of these men to me was to get me to make a statement of these facts in writing, which they might lay before the British consul at Mosul, and ask his influence to obtain them redress from the Turkish Government. I sifted their story, and compared it with disinterested accounts as well as I could, and sent them off to get a dinner while I wrote according to their wish. But the consulate at Mosul and that at Tabriz have both been vacant for a couple of years, and the people all over this part of the world miss their protection.

In the evening we rode over the hills to the neighbour-

ing little village of Mar Serghees to see the church. It is an interesting ancient stone building, with a double body. On the north side is a little underground cave, into which, if an insane man is put over night, he is found in the morning to have recovered his senses. Our interpreter, a native of Seir, assured us that he knew instances of this supernatural cure. The church is hung round with pocket handkerchiefs, mostly cheap printed ones, with John and Mary at the stile, and other old-fashioned popular patterns. The effect is very curious. We saw the same thing at one of the other churches in the plain. They are all votive offerings, made with the same motives with which Greek women made offerings to Juno Lucina; and Mussulman women, as well as Christian women, make their vows and hang up their offerings in the churches which have this special reputation. Adjoining the church is a good country house, whose owner, a Persian sultan, *i.e.*, captain in the army, was spending a few weeks of the summer here. He was courteous to us, inviting us to take a cup of tea, which we gladly accepted, and offering more substantial refreshments, which we declined. Part of his pastoral wealth consists of five or six hundred hives of bees; the hives are earthenware jars, which are piled horizontally, in rows and heaps, like empty wine bottles. We did not mount for our return ride till twilight was deepening into night. The bishop set us the example, and we followed it, of galloping recklessly over the hills, up hill and down dale, as hard as our horses would go homewards. It was delightfully cool, the stars were beginning to shine out of the pearly sky, the horses entered into the frolic *con amore*, and the riders enjoyed it greatly.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE PLAIN OF OROOMIAH—MAR YOHNNAN'S VILLAGES.

Thursday, August 10.—We started for another two days' tour across the plain, among the villages under the jurisdiction of Mar Yohnan. Our first stage was to the village of Cherbash, a little beyond the city, where Kasha Elia (Priest Elias), who is a kind of vicar-general of the patriarch for the Persian part of the nation, had invited us to dine with him.

Our way led us half round the city, and gave us an opportunity of seeing how its mud wall was crumbling everywhere into the moat, and how the moat was getting filled in, and had only here and there a pool of stagnant water; the effect was not one of picturesque ruin, but of lazy neglect and unwholesome decay. But we soon found ourselves in the fields again, and at a little distance saw a crowd of the good people of Cherbash, who had come out to give us the usual welcome. A few of the same principal people were invited everywhere to meet us, and it began to be quite pleasant to see so many well-known faces amid the crowd of strange ones, and to feel that we were acquiring, here also as at Kochanes, quite a large circle of friends. Our host had invited a large company to meet us, and entertained us handsomely, and everything passed off with much enjoyment.

We learnt that the little Koord war was at an end. The Turkish ambassador had remonstrated with the Turkish Koords on proceedings which might embroil Turkey with Persia, and Ali Khan had promised to withdraw his people;

the sheik will then withdraw his, and the affair is over for the present.

Towards evening we rode to the village of Digala, where we were to sup with Malek Pera and spend the night at his house. The malek had built himself a handsome new gate-house of burnt brick (the houses generally being built of mud), which made the approach to his house quite imposing. Here again we were most hospitably received and handsomely entertained. The supper was served on the housetop by the light of painted paper lanterns. Supper over, mattresses were spread for us, also on the housetop. The malek himself had a great standing bedstead on the roof of the adjoining building, which was a little lower, and I noticed, as an indication of the state of society, that his gun stood at his bed-head. We slept soundly under the stars.

Friday, August 11.—There are two (if not more) lofty "hills of ashes" in the plain, concerning which the people have a theory that the ancient fire-worshippers had stations here, and that these hills are the ashes of their perpetual fires. One of these hills is just outside the village of Digala, and we went out this morning to look at it. The people have found that the ashes and soil are capital manure, and have made extensive excavations, which laid the interior of the hill open in several places almost down to the bottom for our inspection. The ashes lie only in thin irregular layers here and there, at various depths, amidst the heap of soil. Towards the bottom of the hill we observed a portion of a wall *in situ*. Building stones have been found in other places; fragments of pottery, and entire vessels of pottery (one of which I saw), and implements in metal. The whole remains produced on my mind the conviction that the hill was simply the débris of ancient habitations. If the mounds which lie so thickly between Aleppo and Mosul were dug into I should expect to find similar remains. The soil I take to be the remains of the earthen walls, of

which nearly all the villages here are built; the thin layers of ashes may be the charred remnants of their roofs.

Took leave of our host after breakfast, and rode on to the large village of Arda, where we dined at the house of Priest Hoshaba. There I learnt from a Chaldean priest, who was one of the company, that his party were disappointed that I had not paid their bishop the compliment of going to pay my respects to him, and that the bishop would have been gratified by, and would have returned, my visit. I fear they would not be better pleased with my explanation, that though it was true that I was the bearer of a letter and messages of greeting from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the prelates of the ancient churches of the East, I must decline to recognise him as one of them, but as a schismatical intruder. That if the bishop had thought fit to do me the honour which other personages in Oroomiah had done, to pay me a visit of compliment, I should have known how to return his courtesy; but that, to tell the truth, I was rather amused to find that he had been expecting what he knew well would have been, under all the circumstances, a remarkable act of deference and homage from me—one which it never occurred to me to pay him, and which, now it was suggested to me, I utterly declined to pay.

We walked through the town to the house of Deacon Syad, who had asked us to take a cup of tea with him, and then took horse and rode to the village of Superajan, the village of the Bishop Mar Yohannan. On the way we halted to look at a church dedicated to Mar Daniel, standing out in the plain, at a distance from any village, which my friends seemed to regard as of special interest. The church consisted of a plain chancel and nave, built of hewn stone, groined with a barrel arch; it had a horseshoe-shaped chancel arch, and a little ornamental carving on the tympanum of the west door; but I did not see anything of remarkable architectural interest in it. At Super-

ajan we were quartered in a new and unfinished building, which Deacon Hnan Isu has erected for a school, and now seeks to get permission from the authorities to open. We supped on the housetop by lamplight; the special incident of the evening was a visit from a Nestorian lady, who, having been brought up in the family of one of the old American missionaries, spoke English with great facility and correctness. She acted as spokeswoman of the assembled people in putting before me their grievances and wishes, and in asking information about England. I fear some of my answers and explanations were disappointing. They complained that the villages had to pay in taxes perhaps twice as much as the sum which found its way at last into the Shah's treasury; and thought it possible that some English moneyed men might be found to farm the taxes of the Nestorian villages, and while making a fair profit relieve the tax-payers of a large proportion of their burden. I had to point out that the system of farming the taxes was a part of the national system, that it was very improbable that the Persian Government would allow foreigners to take any part in it, and that no foreigners would be likely to undertake it without the prospect of a large profit on the trouble and risk; and that by the time the foreign tax-farmers had calculated the expenses of their establishment here, and their profit and risk, it was very likely they could not afford to make much reduction upon the sum at present exacted.

The people seemed to think that there were institutions or individuals in England who would take in young Nestorians and educate them as physicians and schoolmasters and clergymen, and what not. One old priest was urgent with me to take his son back with me and place him in some such way. And I was told of one poor young fellow who had gone over to England to get an education as a physician and had died there.

I agreed that in the present state of medical practice in

the East the medical profession would afford an honourable and lucrative career to some of their young men, if they could get them trained in the European school of medicine. But I had to explain that in sending a young man to England they must be prepared to allow him as much as 200 or 250 tomauns (£100 or £125) a year while he was learning, first English, then the ordinary branches of an English education, as Latin, &c., then while he was a medical student, and walking the hospitals, *i.e.*, perhaps for four or five years; that it seemed to me their hope lay in getting out a competent medical man as a member of the expected English college staff, who would undertake to train a class of medical students, and perhaps establish a small hospital.

I had to disappoint my friend the priest by assuring him that no school would take a young fellow of twenty who could not even speak English, and that I knew no one who would take him gratuitously as a private pupil; and I had at last rather peremptorily to decline to take him back to England with me, and to point out that the proposed English college was to be established on purpose to give an education to such young men as his son.

Some of the grievances which were named to me I had to point out they endured in common with the Mussulman subjects of a bad Government—*e.g.*, the oppressive system of taxation, and the corruption of the sources of justice; or as the result of class prejudices, as the refusal of Mussulmans to buy their produce in the bazaar; or as a consequence of their being inhabitants of the unsettled border land between two ill-governed states, as the liability to Koordish raids; and that in these matters no foreign power could help them.

Others of their grievances, however, it seemed to me were capable of speedy redress. These three, for example:—

1. According to Persian law, if one member of a Christian family turn Mussulman, he or she becomes

entitled to the property of the family, and under the word family not only father and mother, but collateral branches of the family are sometimes included. It is very rarely that a Christian apostatises under the influence of this temptation; but it is not uncommon for an enterprising young Mussulman to seduce or carry off by force a Christian girl of well-to-do family (as enterprising Irishmen not very long since used to run away with an heiress and effect a forced marriage), to declare that she has become a Mussulman, and to claim the property of her family. If the girl has not deserted her religion, it is perfectly easy to get another girl to personate her; she can only be produced in court *veiled*. A young man was made known to me who had recently been deprived of his property in this way, and was seeking redress.

2. The testimony of a Christian is not received in a court of justice against that of a Mussulman.

3. The Christians are not liable to serve in the army, and pay a special poll-tax in lieu of personal service; but lately the authorities have begun to impress young Christians to serve as musicians in the military bands. It seems to me that the next time Persia needs any favour at our hands we may very well ask, as a condition, the redress of these wrongs of our co-religionists.

Saturday, August 10.—We started early from Superajan and rode into the city, where we dined with Dr. Yussuf, brother of the late and uncle of the present Bishop Mar Yohnan, one of our kindest and trustiest friends, whose house had been always open to us on our visits to the city. We trusted to Dr. Yussuf the arrangements to be made for our departure on Monday homewards, and we sent formal messages of leave-taking to the governor and the Serparast. In the evening returned to our tents at Seir. Sunday, August 10, we spent quietly at Seir. In the evening we saw Persian troops at a little distance marching back to the city from their duty of observation of the Koords.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE AMERICAN MISSION.

ON the eve of my departure from Seir two members of the American Mission, Mr. Labaree and Mr. Whipple, paid me a visit and had a long conversation. First they gently deprecated interference with the work they had been carrying on for more than forty years. It was easy to reply that if we came it would be on the repeated invitation of the Nestorian Church (as represented by all its bishops and nearly all its clergy and its chief men), which of course had a right to seek for counsel and assistance from the English Church; that it was natural that they should seek assistance from *us*, and that *we* should afford it, seeing the many reasons there were why they should feel special confidence in us, and we a special interest in them. Then the missionaries sought my concurrence in the outlines of an arrangement between the English and the American agencies, *e.g.*, that we should not establish a school in villages where they already had one, or afford inducements to their agents to enter into our service. I replied that my mission was simply one of inquiry, and that I had no authority to enter into any such arrangements. On being pressed to give some indication of the course likely to be taken by any English clergyman who might be sent out, I very carefully abstained from saying anything which could possibly embarrass the future. My belief is that the people of the villages where there are already schools will at once seek to put them under English control, and that a considerable number of those who have formed both the American and the Papal connections will return to their own Church.

Of the American missionaries I desire to speak with fairness and respect, but I am very much surprised at the small number of their adherents after fifty years of work, when I am assured that not more than 300 families can be reckoned as belonging to their connection; and I am struck by the attitude taken up by many Nestorians who formerly were under their instruction and influence. I think the facts may be explained thus. The older American missionaries here sought to do that which we are now seeking to do—to educate the people and help them to improve themselves, without trying to make proselytes and establish a separate body. They did very much for the people, and everywhere I have come upon the traces of their work, in intelligent men, who desire general education and improvements in their Church, while they still venerate and cling to that Church with its grand past history, and its claims upon their fidelity.

All the older American missionaries are dead or gone, and within the last few years have been succeeded by younger men, who are said to pursue different measures and to have different aims. I desire to speak of these gentlemen with all fairness, and I certainly feel towards them much personal kindness and gratitude. As I approached the city they were kind enough to send me an invitation to occupy their house in the city. They paid me a visit immediately on my arrival. It was convenient to us to pitch our tents near their house in Seir, where we had recourse to the skill of their medical member, and we received much kindness from them.

Still it is my duty to report fairly that the present American missionaries here appear to me, from all I have heard of them, to hold decided nonconformist views, and naturally to desire to win others to these views. Among the new steps which the American missionaries have taken are these:—

They refuse to receive as “members” any persons who will not become total abstainers.

They refuse to baptize the children of any who are not "members."

The old American missionaries, when they had trained a man as a preacher, procured his ordination by his bishop; the present missionaries have begun to procure for their preachers "ordination" at the hands of one of the *priests* in their interests.

They are beginning to build chapels of their own, and in other ways to form a separate religious body.

The Nestorians are strongly attached to their ancient Church, and hold their distinctive Church principles with great tenacity; I think it is therefore easy to understand why many of those who were the pupils of the earlier American missionaries are alienated from their successors, and why these seem now to be making little way among the people.

Since my return the American missionaries have stated their own case in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, which was published in the *Standard* newspaper, Feb. 3, 1877, and which I subjoin:—

"TO HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

"Oroomiah, Persia, Jan. 1.

"Dear Sir,—The Rev. Mr. Cutts, who visited Koordistan and Oroomiah last summer as your representative, with the view of establishing a mission of the Church of England among the Nestorians, and with whom we had several pleasant interviews on departing, kindly offered to convey to you any communications we might at any time desire to forward. We have not felt disposed to avail ourselves of his kind offer until now, when, finding the work committed to us by the Presbyterian Churches of America involved in grave complications as a direct result of his mission, we should be untrue to our trust, and do injustice to you, did we fail to call your attention to the facts, and beg your serious consideration of the evils with which the proposed mission threatens us. We do this the more confidently that your broad and liberal views on Christian unity have long been recognised, both in Europe and America.

"The facts are briefly as follows:—Several of our Nestorian helpers, returning recently to their field of labour in the mountains of Koordistan, were arrested, by order of Mar Shimoon, and taken to his patriarchial

residence at Kochanes. Upon their arrival he demanded why they presumed to return to the mountains, saying, 'Do you not know that I have delivered all my people over to the Church of England?' They replied that they had so understood, but that they did not suppose that the American missionaries would be expected to withdraw from the country as a consequence of that action. The patriarch reiterated his determination to suffer none but agents of the Church of England to do religious work among his people. Our helpers, some of whom had been long and actively engaged in mission labours with their people in the mountains, urged their claim persistently, but without effect. They appealed to the laws of Turkey, as granting religious liberty to all Christians; to the former friendship of the patriarch for the American missionaries, and the benefits he and his people had received at their hands; to the history of our work, in which during more than forty years both missionaries and native helpers had been accorded almost unrestricted access to the mountains. The patriarch appeared to be affected by these arguments, but said he could not withdraw his prohibition in view of his agreement with Mr. Cutts, that none but representatives of the Church of England should be permitted to work in the mountains. Our helpers, during their detention, were treated with marked indignity. Their baggage was seized, and on its way to the patriarch's house a considerable sum of money was abstracted from it by his men. They were finally expelled from the mountains, and with them our entire correspondence, prepared with much care and labour for the guidance of stations beyond (with which our communications are now entirely cut off), together with a quantity of Syriac Bibles and Testaments *en route* to the mountains, were thrown back on our hands. It is due to the patriarch to say that . . . he did make an effort to recover the money stolen by his own men, almost upon his own premises, and that a portion of it was restored. We can characterise the action of the patriarch in this matter in no other terms than as a high-handed outrage upon the liberty of the Gospel without a precedent in the history of our labours in the mountains. Worse than all, it was perpetrated in the name of the Church of England. This act will strengthen the existing impression among the people, that your mission is undertaken in a spirit unfriendly to the interests of our work, an impression, I may say, for which we disclaim all responsibility.

"It would hardly seem necessary that we should call the attention of your Grace to the work of the American Mission to the Nestorians. It is not to be supposed that you would establish a mission among a people with the brightest pages of whose later history you were unacquainted. And yet so persistent has been the effort of late years on the part of unworldly men to misrepresent us, and to depreciate the character and extent of our work, that it is fitting we remind you of a few facts connected with its history. This mission was undertaken with the hope of purifying the worship of the Ancient Nestorian

Church, and reviving its historical spirit of piety and missionary zeal through the existing ecclesiastical organisation. This hope was not abandoned until, after many years of labour, its realisation was found impossible. Patient and persevering efforts were made to enlist the patriarch and priesthood in the work of educating and elevating the people, until at length the fact was recognised that in religion, as well as in politics, the thing to be reformed is seldom a useful ally in the work of reformation. The work has since been carried on directly with the people. The work accomplished and its results speak for themselves. For nearly half a century the missionaries from the American Churches, at an average annual outlay of 25,000 dollars, have toiled to improve the condition, spiritual and temporal, of the Nestorian people. Not from ourselves, but from an English diplomatist in the East, the statement comes that the American Mission have done more than all the foreign embassies in the country to ameliorate the condition of the people of Persia. While approving the correctness of this statement, we take the opportunity to make grateful acknowledgment to the promptness with which the representatives of Great Britain have almost uniformly seconded our efforts when we have asked their aid. Since 1835 sixty-seven adult missionaries have laboured here, ten to twelve of them entirely, or principally, in the mountains, four being buried there. Flourishing male and female schools have been in operation from an early period. From the former about 150 preachers and teachers have been sent out. The numerous graduates of the latter are scarcely, if any, less useful in their own sphere. Five self-supporting churches have been organised, with ten others partially self-supporting, and there are forty-six congregations with helpers under our care. Three high schools and sixty village schools partly supported by us are in operation. Among the Nestorians of Persia, with a population of 25,000, there are very few villages of more than twenty houses in which we have not planted a school. In these villages upwards of 2,500 can read, the direct result of our educational system. The membership of the churches is about 875; of these 125 were added during the past year, with the promise of a greater number in the coming year, as a result of the work of grace now in progress in the churches. Notable among the labours of the missionaries is the translation of the venerable Peschito version of the New Testament into the spoken tongue, which had not previously been reduced to writing, and the publication by our mission press of twenty-one million pages of Christian literature in Syriac. A commodious hospital and a medical training-class have been organised, and gratuitous medical service to the poor has always been a prominent feature of the mission work. The mountain field gives a less encouraging result, attributable in part to the physical obstacles it presents to successful missionary labour, and in part to the wild and lawless character of the people themselves, together with the hostility of the patriarch to all reforms, whether from within or without his Church. There are several bright spots,

however, here among them, the Church at Hassan in Bohtan, whose honoured pastor was formerly a bishop of the old Church.

"Now, concerning the question of the establishment by parties within the Church of England of another mission in Oroomiah, in view of these facts, much might be said. We feel assured that the occurrence which called forth this letter is but the presage of evils which such action will entail upon us. We will not call in question the right, but we do question the wisdom, of planting a rival mission among a people with so limited a population, a people of volatile temperament, largely pauperised by unwise benevolence, and ready to welcome whoever comes with the promise of political protection, whether Russian, French, or English, and especially at a time when we have to encounter opposition and reproach in our efforts to counteract the mercenary spirit of the people, and lead the churches up to self-support and independence. We would ask whether, assuming that our work is of the Lord, there be room for another mission here? Can your mission expect to build except upon the foundations which we have laid, or to grow except by arresting, or impeding, our natural growth? Can you expect to carry on your work except by employing the men whom we have educated, paying them higher wages than we can give, for the reason that their education has involved you in no expense? Will the spectacle of a rivalry of this character be an edifying one to the Musulman population, among whom there exists an interesting state of inquiry regarding the truths of Christianity. These questions we submit to your consideration without discussion. We are not disposed to raise an issue upon them, and though we cannot be indifferent to what we consider the inevitable consequence of the rivalry which we deprecate, we rest the responsibility with its promoters. But we cannot concede any infringement of the freedom of conscience heretofore enjoyed by the Nestorian Christians, and Protestant Christendom would justly condemn us did we fail to insist that the patriarch and his Church shall not be permitted to construe the terms of your alliance with him in a sense adverse to the principles of religious liberty. This much we are sure neither your Grace nor the Church over which you preside will be disposed to deny us, and we would therefore respectfully suggest that a letter to Mar Shimoon from yourself, in accordance with the catholic spirit in which we feel assured you will view the case, would be amply sufficient for this purpose.—Yours very respectfully,

"(Signed) "GEORGE W. HOLMES, "W. L. WHIPPLE,
 "WM. R. STOCKING, "BENJAMIN LABAREE."
 "I. M. OLDFATHER,

It may be expected that I should make some observations upon this letter.

I observe that of what happened to the native agents of the Americans in the mountains we have only the state-

ment of the American missionaries of what their native *employés* stated to them ; and there runs a tone through the narrative which puts us on our guard, if that were necessary, against coming to any conclusions upon it until we have heard the statements of the other side.

I may, however, state at once that it is not correct to say that I was a party to any " agreement that none but representatives of the Church of England should be permitted to work in the mountains," if these words mean that I entered into a compact with the patriarch that he should hinder any others from working there. If it is meant that the patriarch had resolved not to give a formal permission, in the sense of approval, to any foreign agents to work among his people, except such as should come to him recommended by the Archbishop of Canterbury, I was aware that he had formed such a resolution, and I thought, and still think, that under all the circumstances of the case it was a judicious resolution.

The summary which the Americans give of what their compatriots have done during nearly half a century among the Nestorians is interesting. That work was done chiefly, it will be admitted, by Dr. Grant, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Whipple (the father of the signer of the present letter), and others of the elder missionaries, who are now dead or gone ; they worked through the existing Nestorian ecclesiastical organisation, seeking to educate and evangelise the Nestorian Church from within. The present missionaries, however, as I have stated in the text, and as they openly avow in their letter, have abandoned the policy of working through the existing ecclesiastical organisation, have set themselves openly in opposition to it, and are gathering separatist congregations out of the Nestorian body. This new policy, I believe, will prove fatal to their work. Many of their former adherents, including some who were the fellow-helpers of the earlier school of missionaries, have withdrawn from their connection, and it is chiefly

these who have lately swelled the long-continued cry for help from the English Church.

The first paragraph of the letter and the last answer one another. The first paragraph holds up the patriarch to universal reprobation because he declines to sanction the intrusion of the American agents, who avowedly seek to draw away his people from their ancient Church. The last paragraph holds up the Archbishop of Canterbury to universal reprobation if he shall intrude any English agents into this field, which the Americans wish to keep to themselves.

We are accustomed to this kind of appeal from Dissenting bodies. When they have established a mission abroad, and the Church of England proposes to establish a mission in the same country, they deprecate this unfriendly intrusion upon their work, and point out how this rivalry will injure the cause of Christian missions in the eyes of the heathen. But when they are sending a mission into any part of the mission field pre-occupied by other workers they appeal to the principles of religious liberty.

But here the case is different from those to which we are accustomed. This is the case of an ancient Christian body which, by the mouth of its entire hierarchy and the vast majority of its people, appeals to the Church of England to help it to educate and revive and reform itself. The American Congregationalists desire us, in the name of religious liberty, to refuse this appeal, in order that they may not be hindered in the endeavour, which they openly avow and have just commenced, to tear this ancient Church into pieces. I think it will be found that English Churchmen have a strong sympathy with these descendants of the Christians of the further East, and are not disposed to abandon them to the new policy of the American Congregationalists.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE PLAIN OF OROOMIAH—MAR YOHANNAN'S VILLAGES.

THE villages of the third Oroomian bishop were at the northern end of the plain, and it was arranged that we should see something of them on our way to Tabriz.

Monday, August 14.—We struck tents, packed our goods, and prepared for departure. But departing is very slow work in these Eastern regions. The baggage horses were to have been up early, but they did not arrive till late. We left the katurjis and servants to load and follow us, while we rode down to the city, where one of the leading Nestorians, Baboula, had pressed us to halt for a farewell dinner. Dinner was hardly over when we were surprised by a visit from the Serparast, who, learning where we were, had come to say adieu. In conversation I asked him if statements which had been made to me about the two Persian laws recorded above, page 280, were correct, and received his assurance that they were. I ventured to say that they seemed to me indefensible, and that I did not see how the Persian Government could refuse to listen to remonstrance against them. I ventured further to suggest how greatly he would signalise his tenure of office as protector of the Christians, and win the gratitude of the Christians of Europe as well as of Persia, if he could get them repealed.

When we began to talk about continuing our journey we learnt that our katurji had deposited his load at Dr. Yussuf's, and gone off with his horses, and did not intend to continue *his* journey till the next day; and we were

pressed to follow his example, sleep at Dr. Yussuf's, and start fair early next morning. To this I would not agree. Malek Babou of Yangeji had invited us to make a short stage of four or five hours to his house and sup there, and I would not break the engagement; so I left peremptory orders for the luggage to overtake us on Tuesday night at Gavilan, where we were to stay at Mar Yohnan's, and we got off by five o'clock. We had only just got outside the town, however, when a group of Mussulmans drinking tea by the roadside invited us to join them, and at their invitation we dismounted and sat on the ground with them and drank a cup of tea. This delayed us half an hour, and helped to bring us into difficulties; for we had only got half-way to our destination when night overtook us. Dr. Yussuf was a capital guide, and led us safely along the bridle-paths and across the ditches. I well remembered one particular bridge over a wider ditch than usual which had a hole in the middle, and I had noticed how conveniently a well had been dug on the other side, so that the rider when pitched over his horse's head at the hole in the ditch might himself go head first into the well. But Dr. Yussuf guided us safely over this, as over many pitfalls, and we were beginning to feel tired, and to think we must be near our night quarters, when our guide pulled up in the middle of a field and admitted that we had lost our way! We tried a cast in one direction which led us to nothing. We tried in another direction, and saw a village a little way off and made towards it, when we were pulled up short by a wide brook—how deep we did not know—between us and it. However, our guide plunged his horse in and scrambled up the bank on the other side, and we followed his example; but when we rode into the village it was not the village we sought. We holloaed, but the whole village seemed asleep, and we received no answer except the barking of the dogs; I daresay both dogs and villagers

took us for a group of Koords who were better left with no other answer. We rode off again in another direction, and I was making up my mind that we had better "hobble" the horses and sleep on the ground till dawn, when we fortunately met a belated villager, who indicated our way, and we rode on with fresh hope. Rode into another village street, and in answer to our holloa a lighted candle held up on a housetop dimly disclosed a group of men, and showed us that our friend the malek had still clung to the hope of our turning up, although it was somewhere near midnight. I was very tired; we made a hasty supper, and lay down as we were on the housetop to sleep. A curiously public life is this living on the housetop. When I woke at dawn in the morning and happened to look over the edge of my bed, I found myself looking down into the sleeping face of the lady of the adjoining house; and when I got up to make such a toilette as circumstances admitted I found half the population of the village had risen and were making their toilettes also! Our host, I forgot to say, was the gentleman who had been imprisoned for murder all the week, and let out on Sunday to go and see his friends, and who had dined with us on that Sunday at the house of the chief carpenter. It turned out that when he returned to the Serparast on Monday, the protector of the Christians transacted some piece of ordinary business with him, and dismissed him without any further explanation.

Tuesday, August 15.—When I got sight of our host by daylight I was much amused. He was to accompany us to Tabriz, and he had got himself up for the occasion. The last time I saw him he had sandy hair and beard. This morning it was died black, and trimmed with great precision after the ancient Persian fashion; a day or two's growth showed that it ought to have been snowy white. He was attired in a plum-coloured coat, and when shortly after we saw him with a firm seat on a good horse, he

certainly did not look like the septuagenarian I supposed he really was.

Our road after breakfast took us by the margin of the lake. What had looked in the distance like a line of breakers turned out to be the fringe of salt at the water's edge. The breeze gently ruffled the surface, and the view of lake and mountain was a very pleasant one. After a three hours' ride we came to a row of black tents pitched on the low marshy pastures near the lake; their tenants were Nestorians, and we pulled up and rested our horses, and got a refreshing draught of milk for ourselves. Another hour brought us to Gavilan, the village of Mar Yohnan.

The American Mission has a "Castle" here, a large piece of orchard and vineyard, surrounded by a lofty wall with turrets at the angles, and an extensive house in the middle of the ground. The American party is strong here; the Papal party also is strong, and has built a chapel in the middle of the village, the village church unfortunately being on the top of a rugged hill an hour's walk out of the village. There is a great antagonism between the two parties. We took tea at the "Castle," and returned to dine and sleep at the bishop's house. Two of the villagers were brought to me to tell me how a few weeks before some of Ali Kagher's Koords, of the tribe of Mamadie, had come down upon them from the hills and swept off fourteen oxen and twelve cows; this makes the fourth example of Koord cattle-lifting which has been brought under my own notice during the short time we have been in these parts.

This was our last day in the plain of Oroomiah, and this will be the place to insert some particulars which have not yet found a place in our diary.

The Nestorians of the plain differ much in character and circumstances from those of the mountains. They are a less picturesque and interesting people, more "civilised."

They dress in rather loose trousers, gathered in at the ankle, a kind of frock coat, girded with a belt at the waist, and a tall lamb-skin cap, like other Persians. The necessities of life are more abundant and more easily obtained in the fertile plain than in the mountains, so that they are not so poor. On the other hand, the people here complain that they suffer much more oppression at the hands of their Mussulman neighbours and masters than their brethren of the mountains.

The Nestorians here cling with great tenacity to their religion, and are diligent in attendance upon its outward observances, *e.g.*, there is daily morning and evening prayer in all the churches, which (at least in the evening) are regularly attended by a fair proportion of the people. Preaching here is common (general, I think) on Sundays, and the people, perhaps, hold their religion more intelligently than their mountain brethren.

In all the 104 villages of the plain there is, perhaps, not a single school open at this moment, and in the winter months the number of (Nestorian) schools is very few indeed. Yet there is a considerable desire among the people for the establishment of schools; there are a number of men qualified to teach in them, but they want some one to organise and superintend the working of a system of village schools; and I think that a clergyman and a trained schoolmaster in the city, and a little help in money, would suffice to create and carry on a system of schools all over the plain, which would do an excellent work among the people.

The Roman Catholic establishment consists of a bishop, seven French priests, and three native priests, eight Lazarists and sixteen Sisters; of whom the bishop, four French and three native priests, four Lazarists, and some Sisters are in Oroomiah; one priest in Tehooma (in the mountains); and the rest in Salmast. In Oroomiah, city and plain, they have about two hundred persons converts;

in all the mountains and this plain, and Salmast, about two hundred houses. They offer many advantages in the way of protection from local oppression, education, and kindness, but they seem to be making little progress among the people.

It is very natural to think that among the archives at Kochanes, or in some village in the fastnesses of the mountains, or at the city of Oroomiah, or somewhere among the bishops or maleks scattered over the plain, there may exist ancient records which would throw a light upon the history of the people, or, perhaps, records of still greater and more general interest. I made diligent inquiry, and I believe that nothing of the kind exists among the mountain tribes or the Persians of the plain. The late patriarch possessed a document said to have been (and I have no reason to doubt it) a confirmation of his possessions with the seal of Mohammed himself, and he may have had other documents of equal age; but when Bedr Khan Beg seized the patriarch's house thirty years ago he carried off this interesting document, and destroyed all other writings he could lay hands upon.

The Chaldean portion of the nation may possess some literary treasures unknown to us, but I think it unlikely. The majority of the Syriac MSS. in the British Museum (among them the important version of the Epistles of Ignatius) came from the book rooms of monasteries in Egypt; and it is probably in some such ancient collections of MSS., if anywhere, that the discovery of any other treasures of Syriac literature is to be anticipated.

CHAPTER XXXII.

OROOMIAH TO TABRIZ.

Wednesday, August 16.—We resumed our travelling habits, rose early, and started for Gavilan by five o'clock. We were rather a large party, viz., our two selves, interpreter, and servant, and two katurjis, and five chief men of the Persian Nestorians (Mar Goriel, Malek Yohnan, Malek Pera, Malek Babon, Dr. Yussuf), and an extra servant—a round dozen in all. We soon found ourselves ascending the mountains which divide the plain of Oroomiah from the smaller plain of Salmast. The road is a well-marked bridle track, steep enough in places, and the scenery wild enough, but presenting no such difficulties as in the former half of our journey. It possessed some dangers, however, for at the very summit of the pass we found a military post, where a guard of Persian cavalry was stationed to protect travellers and caravans from the plundering Koords. It was a very picturesque scene: beside a rough shed among the rocks a group of spears was stuck in the ground with their pennons fluttering wildly in the strong breeze which blew through the pass; the horses were tethered hard by; the soldiers gathered by the roadside to see us pass; a sentry was stationed on the windy top of the hill, whence he commanded a view of the road on both sides.

Descended gradually into the plain of Salmast. Up a valley on the left we saw a wood of forest trees, near which is a natural hot sulphur spring, over which a bath-house has been erected. An hour further we came

to the village of Hassar, or Koodkaran; a mud wall with round towers at the angles encloses a few straggling cottages, and at its gate is a khan, with a room over the gate, where we stopped to lunch. Outside the gate is an unenclosed tomb, with a sabre carved on the top and an inscription.

Hence we rode across the marshy lake end of the plain, the plain itself stretching away among the mountains on our left. It was an amusing ride. We squattered through the marshy land, and scrambled across the ditches which intersect it, and cantered over the firmer ground, the Persians singing every now and then, and W. replying with snatches of English songs, and each side making fun of what seemed to them the other's want of melody, till we reached the village of Yoshanlui, amidst its groves and gardens at the foot of the mountains on the other side of the plain. Here, instead of pitching the tents—which we never used again—we hired accommodation in a native Mussulman's house, and took up our quarters there. They were not luxurious quarters; a carpet was spread for us in a corner of the courtyard, which served all the purposes of a farmyard, the edge of our carpet being about a yard from the manure heap; this served for the common sitting-room, and we bargained for space enough on the housetop to spread our rugs for bed room. We bought a lamb for supper for our large company. The shepherd brought it on his shoulders, and it was critically examined by our Persian friends. The first was rejected as too lean, and another was fetched. Then they bargained about the price. The poor beast was killed on the spot, a few yards from where we sat; in another corner a fire was kindled to cook it. I was reminded of Ezekiel: "Set on a pot, set it on and also pour water into it, gather the pieces thereof into it, even every good piece, the thigh and the shoulder, fill it with the choice bones . . . make it boil well, and let them seethe the bones of it therein . . . the pot whose scum is therein."

The incident afforded another Scripture illustration : while they were putting the pieces into the pot W. cried out to them to keep out one of the " thighs " and roast it, for, like the sons of Eli, he was tired of sodden flesh, and would have roast. Still another illustration : when all was cooked and served they put the shoulder before me because it was the priest's portion. Climbed up to the housetop by a ladder and slept there.

Thursday, August 17.—Started very soon after sunrise, and rode all day along the plain, perhaps six miles in breadth, which surrounds the head of the lake, having the mountains on our left hand and the lake on our right, a fringe of villages and gardens at the foot of the mountains; the rest of the plain barren at this dry summer season, but in spring no doubt covered with grass. After four and a half hours' ride we stopped outside the village of Topschai, under the mud wall of a vineyard and the shade of a few trees, for our noon rest. It was not a promising-looking halting-place, but it turned out a very pleasant bivouac. The boiled mutton of last night " coldly furnished forth " a luncheon, and from the vineyard over the wall we obtained (by fair purchase!) more grapes than we could eat. We were all in good spirits, and enjoyed ourselves much.

On starting again I happened to be a little in the rear of the rest, and accustomed as we had become to Eastern costumes, I was struck with the gay appearance of our party. Old Malek Babou in his plum-coloured coat, with the white shirt showing at the sleeves; Malek Pera in his blue coat and white girdle; and, above all, the bishop in red Turkish riding-boots with yellow tops, loose crimson trousers, gay chintz vest and green coat, with chintz girdle and red fez, " glancing like a dragon-fly "; the housings of the horses were gay with green and scarlet and gold fringe. To see the party pricking across the trackless plain, with the mountains on one side and the lake on the

other, under a brilliant sun, was like a scene out of an old romance; the pith helmet and riding-boots gave picturesqueness of outline even to the grey morning-dress of the young Englishman who formed one of the group.

Late in the afternoon we halted at the village of Tassach; the walls of the village were extensive, and its groves and gardens stretched half across the plain. Our Persians proposed to lodge at the caravanserai, and I was very glad of the opportunity of studying one, and the customs of travellers staying in one. We rode through a great gateway into a very large oblong courtyard. Over the side through which we entered was a range of rooms; that over the gateway was the best. On the left side of the courtyard was a row of niches in the wall, which served for mangers, and beside each manger was a ring, to which our horses and mules were soon fastened by their halters. Of the right side of the courtyard the further half was occupied with enclosed stabling, the nearer half with small rooms for passengers, with a verandah in front. At the opposite end of the courtyard were the rooms of the keeper of the khan. We took possession of the great room over the entrance, which was approached by an exterior stair in the corner of the courtyard, and had a small anteroom which served as a kitchen. The roof of the verandah formed a "housetop," where carpets were soon spread, and where we ate and slept. I went out into the village to look at a mosque close by, which is in a dilapidated condition, but has a fine dome, and is a building of ancient date and of some architectural merit. While we were taking a glass of tea *en attendant* the supper, another traveller and his servant rode into the khan, mounted at once up to our open-air parlour, slipped off his shoes at the edge of the carpet, and stepped across and kissed my hand. It turned out that he was an Armenian of Oroomiah, who knew who I was, and was known to some of our party. He was a lucky fellow, for

supper was served at the time, and he got an invitation to join us, without having to wait for his food as we had had to wait for ours. During supper a loud trampling of hoofs and jangling of bells was heard, and a large train of empty pack-horses trooped into the courtyard, and filled it full of life and animation for the rest of the evening. Supper ended, we lay down to sleep upon our carpets, with a horseman's cloak thrown over me. It is really very pleasant to sleep thus. The air is pure and cool (it is sometimes cold before dawn); and it is pleasant to lie and look up at the stars and listen to "the noises of the night." To-night the noises were a continual jangling of bells of all sizes and tones as the pack-horses moved, and the click-click of the instrument used here for a curry-comb (*karika* in Syrian, *kashou* in Turkish) as the katurjis groomed their horses, which were continued long after dark.

Friday, August 18.—Again we got off soon after sunrise, and our way still lay along the plain of Choldiama, with distant views of the lake and the picturesque mountains beyond it. After about five hours' ride we halted for luncheon under the trees, beside a pond supplied by a pure spring, outside the village of Cusa Kuran. We could get nothing for luncheon but fruit—grapes, peaches, and plums. I thought of the Serparast and his emphatic "*surtout point de fruit*," but after a five hours' ride one must eat something.

In the afternoon we got into the great caravan road between Stamboul and Teheran, which, after the solitary ways we had been used to, seemed quite busy with traffic. We met numerous groups of people, men, women, and children, sick and lame and blind, some on foot, some on horseback, some in horse-litters, on their way to a reputed worker of miracles at Choi, to whom all the credulous Mohammedan world is flocking to be healed of its diseases. Now a blind man led by a woman, his wife or daughter;

then a lady, muffled up to the eyes, riding on a pillion behind a servant ; then a poor wretched object dragging himself along on crutches :—Such scenes as were witnessed 1800 years ago, when the roads “from Galilee, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Decapolis, and from beyond Jordan,” were thronged with sick people “that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those which had the palsy, and He healed them.” (Matt. iv.)

We overtook also a long caravan of pack-horses loaded with bales of European goods ; many of the horses, the leaders of subordinate teams brought together into this great caravan, had bells ; but the leader of the whole caravan had, besides half a dozen smaller bells, a large deep-toned bell, and his load ornamented with a couple of flags.

We arrived early at Dizakalil, where we were to sup and sleep. It is a remarkable village, the property of the Shah, surrounded by large vineyards and gardens, each enclosed by a lofty wall. What was remarkable was the newness and good repair of the walls and their extent. We rode for a considerable distance between these blank walls, fourteen feet high, with a vine trailing over here and there, the branches of the trees overhanging, but with no passengers and no sign of life. At last we came to doors in the lofty walls with people standing about them, then to a small khan, where all Christian travellers stop, and where we therefore took up our abode. This was much smaller than our khan of last night, but the same in its general features.

Saturday, August 19.—We had before us a hard day's journey of about thirty-two miles into Tabriz, so we had agreed to rise very early. Dr. Yussuf woke us at half-past two, and we (at least I) dutifully got up and dressed, and ate some breakfast, and then lay down again and dozed till it was time to start. We got off by the first glimmer

of dawn, and were well on our way before the first rays of the sun darted over the mountain Miancholi on our left. Our road lay across a vast plain, which stretched before us all the two-and-thirty miles into town, and on our right further than we could see. At first the plain was covered with coarse grass, then came a tract so impregnated with salt that it grew nothing but scanty patches of a low shrub. We were told the plain was famous for robbers. Presently we met a man leading a horse, who got into conversation with our Persians, and told them the led horse was that of his servant, who had been killed by the robbers the previous day. In the middle of the plain is a large "castle," *i.e.*, a square enclosed with a lofty mud wall, with a gate tower, and round towers at the angles, where troops are stationed to protect the road. We overtook an immense caravan of pack-horses on the road to Tabriz, loaded with merchandise, and making a long cloud of dust. Fortunately we had a strong cool breeze from the mountains all day, or the day's march across the plain would have been more trying than it was. After six hours' riding we stopped at a caravanserai in the village of Maian for rest and food. The khanji was not to be found, and we had some delay and difficulty in getting an entrance; then we had an uncomfortable luncheon of water-melons and grapes, and had to pay for the water we drank; an uncomfortable sleep on the floor of the room; and were glad to get into the saddle again. Two hours more brought us to the gardens and vineyards which surround the city. These, as at Dizakalil, were surrounded by lofty walls; the doors into them were very remarkable; they were very low, so that no animal could get through them; they were framed with stone, and the door itself was a massive slab of stone, with two pins worked out of the stone itself for hinges, which turned in holes in the sill and lintel. We found one vineyard, however, with a gate through which our horses could pass,

and the owners were there, and our friends arranged that we should make up for our poor luncheon by getting some fruit here. It was very pleasant. We sat under the shade of the trees, and our hosts presently brought us a basket full of bunches of grapes of different kinds, and we feasted upon them.

We were not uselessly delaying our journey, for while we were thus occupied we had sent forward one of our number to ascertain whether the English consul had arrived; if not, to go to the French consul, who was acting for him, and ascertain where we could find lodging in the city. We met our messenger as we entered the city. We learnt that the English consul had not yet arrived, and the consulate was unfurnished; but the acting consul offered to furnish an apartment for the two English subjects, leaving the Nestorians to find lodgings in the city. We adopted the suggestion, and proceeded to the British consulate. The house is quite a palace. It consists of two very large quadrangles, planted with trees and shrubs, and cultivated as gardens, each surrounded by buildings. The reception-rooms are in the block of building between the two gardens, a stately suite of large rooms, while a colonnade extends along the whole front, supporting the roof of a verandah, and giving a grand appearance to the house. It does not take much time or trouble to furnish an apartment after the Eastern style: lay down a couple of strips of carpet, and the room is furnished and ready at once to receive its guests. Let a narghile and a tray of coffee-cups be forthcoming at the right time, and a tray of boiled mutton and pillaff later on, and a bowl and ewer for washing the fingers, and what more can a traveller need? We did not require nearly so much. In effect, we put our luggage into the apartment, and lived and slept in the verandah, and our own camp equipage and servant supplied all our needs.

The English consul not having arrived, our journey to

Tabriz was a useless detour. I had come that way entirely to give the consul a report of my visit to the Nestorians, and to try to interest his sympathies strongly on their behalf, and to introduce my Nestorian friends, who had private affairs in which they sought the assistance of his good offices. I saw the French consul, but I had been forewarned by common report that he was in the interests of the French Papal party in Persia, and anticipated that he would use all his interest against us and our friends; I was not therefore surprised when he made difficulties even about our own further route through Russia, and made a great favour of smoothing away the pretended difficulties, and absolutely refused to see the Nestorians, or to hear what their business was.

There was nothing else to detain us in Tabriz; on the other hand, we were told that we should have to lose no time on the road to catch the steamer from Poti on the Black Sea to Constantinople, and that if we missed that steamer we should have to wait a fortnight for the next. We accordingly resolved to take the road again next morning. The Russian consul was in his summer quarters, a dozen miles off, up in the mountains. We ordered a horseman to be sent off at the first dawn to get our passports *visées*. We directed horses to be hired for ourselves and our baggage; and then sauntered through the bazaars and through the European quarter to the house of a German gentleman who had invited us to dinner; and then home to our mattresses under the verandah.

Next morning after breakfast our interpreter appeared, and on inquiring whether the horseman had come back with the passports, we found that he had sent off a footman with them only ten minutes before. This is the way they do things in the East. Not that it mattered much, for they could not hire horses enough for our journey, and I was advised to resign myself to circumstances and wait till next day.

To this Eastern skill in the art of how not to do it I opposed my Western determination to do what I had resolved to do. I found that a *fourgon* could be had in the afternoon to Julfa, so I ordered it to be hired and packed, and everything to be ready for a start as soon as the passports should arrive. The morning was filled up with visits from some of the European residents at Tabriz, from the American missionary there, from a kavass of the governor with a complimentary message and two trays of sweetmeats, with taking leave of our Nestorian friends, with seeing the *fourgon* packed, and with luncheon.

I had supposed that a *fourgon* was a light van constructed to carry passengers. I found it a rude tilted waggon without springs, drawn by four horses abreast, into which first your luggage is thrown anyhow, and then you may climb into it and arrange your things as well as you can, and sit or recline upon them at your pleasure. We were all packed and ready, when at last our footman arrived with the passports at about five o'clock; and, resisting all attempts to induce us to postpone our departure till next morning, with a brief repetition of hearty adieux, we jolted through the streets of Tabriz.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

TABRIZ TO JULFA.

FOUR or five hours' journey across the plain of Tabriz northward brought us after dark to a khan, where we stopped for the night. My companions slept in the khan; I preferred to sleep in the waggon, as it stood out in the open road; the bed might be a hard one, but it was clean, and the night air pure. Next day we began to enter among the hills; passed a mass of rock capped with a calcareous covering like that near Bitlis. Halted at noon at the khan of a long village, and when it was time to start—the fourgonji was not to be found. He did not turn up till five—two hours too late. The consequence was that at dark, when we were still two hours short of our station, just the two hours he had wasted, he pulled up by a mill at the roadside, and declared that it was not possible to drive the rest of the road in the dark. We failed to move his unwillingness, and halted where we were perforce. My companions slept in the mill-house; I again preferred the waggon and the fresh air.

Wednesday, August 23.—Having stopped last night short of the station, we saved some distance to-day by leaving the station altogether on our right, and taking a more direct road to Julfa. We started before sunrise. For the first hour or two the road was a track over the rocky and rock-strewn surface of the barren hills, with higher ranges in the distance. There were some remarkable cloud effects. A thick layer of fleecy cloud or mist spread over a great table-land on our right, and overflowed

down the hill-sides. Here in "a veil of thinnest lawn," through which every rock was visible; there it poured—or seemed to pour—over the edge of a great semicircular declivity, like a Niagara. Thus it continued as long as we were in sight of it. The sun tipped the western mountain tops with rose tint as we began to descend the hills, and I suppose, as he gained power, he would gradually gather up the mists into clouds and dissipate them in the heated air. People seldom do gain anything by taking a short cut, and I doubt whether we did now. The road gradually descended into a pass among the mountains, not the rounded hills of which we had seen so much, but rocky mountains, with the strata tilted up almost perpendicularly. A mountain stream made its way through the pass on its course to the Araxes. It was certainly the wildest drive I ever took in any vehicle. At its best the road was nothing better than a track across the rocky and rock-strewn surface of the hills; but when we got fairly down into the pass we came to the worst of it. Here the road had been swept away in places by the last storm; the waggon lurched down the broken bank into the rocky bed of the stream; presently the driver shook up his horses, and charged them at the broken ascent of the bank a little lower down, and the waggon heaved up again into the road. And this happened, not once, but half a dozen times. However, we had a profound conviction that the driver would do his best to keep his horses and waggon from coming to grief, and in taking his best care of them he could not help taking his best care of us. So we did not trouble ourselves about the dangers of the road, but found occupation in keeping ourselves under shelter from the burning sun, and in admiring the wild scenery and the wonderful tricks which nature—first in some terrific momentary upburst from beneath, which must have rocked the earth on its axis, and then in the long silent labour of

snow and frost and rain—had played with the internal strata and the surface conformation of the mountains.

At length the jaws of the pass gradually widened, and we had a stretch of plain before us through which flowed the historical Araxes; and an hour's comparatively easy driving brought us to Julfa, the frontier town between Persia and her mighty and dangerous neighbour of the north.

As we emerged from the pass we came upon some very remarkable mountain scenery. On the right a great regular conical hill, large enough to be called a mountain, buttressed by its own débris, which had slid down with curious regularity into little conical hills all round its base, like the apses of a Rhine church surrounding its central tower. Right in front was a still more remarkable mountain—a huge mass of rock from base to summit, roughly domical (an elliptical dome) in outline, but deeply serrated and ridged. A bold shoulder struck out to the right, from whose extremity rose a lofty pinnacle. It reminded one roughly of the dome and minaret of a mosque. A few miles further we drove into the desolate-looking station of Julfa. A custom-house, post-house, and telegraph station on the Persian side of the shallow river, and another custom-house, post-house, and telegraph station on the other side, and apparently not a habitation besides. We had an introduction to the gentleman in charge of the telegraph station, who hospitably entertained us. “Don't you find it rather dull here?” we ventured to ask him. “Ah! c'est bien triste! Voila,”—pointing all round the horizon—“pas un arbre, pas un brin d'herbe!” “And how long have you been here?” “Sept ans!” We beg to suggest Julfa to his Imperial Majesty as a place of exile when Siberia shall have become inconveniently crowded.

There are some ancient tombstones at Julfa which are interesting, and the inscriptions, we believe, unpublished.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

JULFA TO ERIWAN.

THE mountains we penetrated by the rugged pass described in the last chapter are not an unsuitable border for the ancient and feeble Persian empire on the side of its young, vigorous and aggressive rival of Russia ; and the historical river Araxes is a fitting line of demarcation between the two empires which stretch, one northward to the Arctic seas, the other southward to the Indian Ocean.

We were carried across the river in a clumsy ferry-boat, and our luggage was carried up to the Russian Custom-house. We presented our passports, which were acknowledged to be *en regle*. We had brought a letter from the Russian consul at Tabriz, which authorised us to use the Government postal service. There was our baggage, not very great, and with nothing contraband in it—except a bag of Turkish tobacco !—and we submitted ourselves and our belongings to the gracious consideration of the gentleman in a flat cap who represented the majesty of the Czar. His Imperial Majesty's representative was grimly civil, but dilatory. It was a long time before we could induce him to look at our baggage at all ; then after the fatigue of peeping superficially into one trunk, he took a rest before he asked us to unstrap the next ; and then took some time to make up his mind that on the whole it was not necessary to look into any more. Then we had to order the carriages, and there was more delay about the horses ; they had to be fetched up, or fed, or something ; meantime, seeing a Samavar brought out, we took the hint and asked for some tea. By the time we had finished tea it

was already twilight, and I was strongly urged to stay where we were for the night. But I suspected that all the delay had had this for its object, and I was resolved not to encourage future tricks upon travellers by crowning this one with success. Besides, I was in no mood for delay. We had left Persia fairly behind us on the other side the river, and our faces were turned homeward. As for the night, what more charming than to drive at a rapid pace through the fresh soft night air? So I insisted; two *troitkas* were harnessed, our luggage packed, and presently off we went, with jingling bells, at a dashing pace, into the deepening twilight.

We could see the outline of the hills we were approaching, and the stars coming out fast above them, and the cleft in the ridge through which our road must pass. Is there anything more exciting than riding or driving rapidly through the dark? And after the slow caravan, and the slower *fourgon*, the pace of the *troitka* was glorious. Everybody knows the *troitka* from pictures; it is a small cart built round-bottomed like a section of a boat. Two of our trunks form a seat for the two travellers, and two others a seat for the driver. Three horses abreast, the shaft horse with the picturesque semicircle over his head, to which he is strapped up, I think, for the purpose of preventing him from breaking out of his trot into a gallop, and so shaking the vehicle—or at least the passengers—to pieces. The side horses are loosely attached by their traces, and can put down their heads and fling up their heels and gallop along at a great pace—a pace which brings us, long before we expected it, to the first post-house, where we supped and stopped for the night.

Thursday, August 24.—Rose early from my bed on the floor of the post-house, and going into the air was just in time to catch the rose-tint on the range of western hills at sunrise. The forms of the range were tame, but the rosy flush touching each projecting ridge and peak was delicious. With all my early rising I could not get our

party off till seven o'clock ; but once started again the rapid driving through the morning air was exhilarating. There were very wild mountain forms on our right ; indeed I think in the same space I never saw such a wonderful combination of various forms. Just behind us was the cone we saw yesterday with its conical buttresses, then the grand rugged domical rock with its pinnacle, the mosque and minaret ; on the horizon the ordinary wilderness of water-moulded hills. Presently there came in view two ridges of rock, which started suddenly out of the plain, like the castle rock at Wan ; two long ridges, some hundred yards apart, steep, rocky, deeply serrated, rudely fitting to one another, like the jaws of some vast monster protruded through the earth and about to devour the heavens.

"LOOK THERE !" A turn of the road had brought it into view. A world of plain lay before us ; on either side long mountain ranges ; right opposite, on the further side of the plain, beyond its horizon, a vast conical mountain rose into the heavens, snow-capped deep down from its summit, with broad ribs of snow stretching further down its sides, and a network of snow between the ribs. IT MUST BE ARARAT !

We had not expected to see it till a further point of our journey, and then we had only calculated on seeing it on the distant horizon, or perhaps catching a passing glimpse of it in the gap of a nearer range. But this must be ARARAT ! It is on a grander scale of magnitude from all the world of hills and mountains around us ; it is of a different order of creation. The Titans might have moulded this curiously complex system of hills, or thrown up those rugged jaws of stone, or even have upheaved that vast rocky dome with its fantastic pinnacle ; but God Almighty made this mountain, which in its vast bulk and simple majesty dominates them all. The difference in size and style may be compared with the difference between the houses on Ludgate Hill and the dome of St. Paul's.

It **MUST** be Ararat; but where are the double peaks? When one came to analyse the mountain, after the first burst of delighted surprise and the long pause of solemnised admiration, it appeared a grand simple cone, sweeping down with a gentle curve into a broad spreading base, filling the eye, and satisfying the mind, and realising one's ideal of a great and famous mountain. Some world-famous mountains turn out to be merely the slightly highest peaks of a number of rival peaks in a mountain range; but here is the primitive idea of a mountain, rising from a vast base in one grand mass, isolated, simple, and severe, till his snow-crowned head seems to reach the heavens.

How seldom the things and places one has heard much about do satisfy us when at last we see them. I can count on my fingers those with which I have not been thus disappointed: Lincoln Cathedral on its height; the Normandy Mont St. Michael, with its combination of natural and artificial features, more picturesque than any painter ever invented; Lake Lucerne; the Alps; Venice, including St. Mark's; and now—Ararat!

What is the cause of this general disappointment with the grand works of art, and even of nature? It would seem that the mind can picture to itself things more beautiful than art can achieve, or than even nature ordinarily presents. It follows that the mind of man is on a greater scale than the things of this world, for it conceives a grander world—more noble cities, more majestic men, more beautiful women, fairer landscapes, brighter stars, a more heroic life in a nobler society. Is it not an evidence that man is the exiled native of a grander world, and is adapted to a nobler life? Is it not a prophecy that there is a "golden city," and "a new heavens and earth," and a diviner life awaiting him hereafter?

Meantime I thank God that I have been allowed to see the majestic vision of Ararat—for it **MUST** be Ararat, although it has only one peak!

We travelled towards it all day across the plain, and therefore had it constantly before our eyes. It absorbed the attention and afforded a subject for unceasing study. If we looked round it was only to compare it with the dwarfed mountains around, and to see anew how it dominated the whole world besides.

At noon we reached the town of Natchewan, where we halted for our mid-day meal and rest. There is a very good post-house here, where they served us some soup and cutlets for dinner in European style. After dinner I strolled through the bazaar, which is of Eastern character.

About 4.30 off again on our homeward road. What a pace the troikas go! How recklessly they round the sharp street corner to the left and then to the right, and out into the open country once more!

"THERE ARE THE TWO PEAKS!" We have suddenly come in sight of Ararat again. How different its appearance under the different atmospheric conditions. A cone of pale blue-grey, silhouetted against a sky only a shade paler, a haze concealing all detail; even the snow of the summit is undistinguishable from the rock of its sides. But a horizontal cloud floats between the peaks and clearly distinguishes their several outlines. The lesser peak is not where I had strained my eyes to see it, as a mere lesser peak of the great snow-clad summit; it is another mountain—the lesser Ararat—of the same general simple conical outline as the greater mountain. But hitherto the two had been in a direct line with our line of approach, so that in the distance the greater outline had swallowed up the lesser; and the horizontal cloud resolves them into two.

And so all afternoon we drive on across the plain, constantly watching the continuous changes of aspect of the great mountain, only glancing round now and then at the nearer landscape we are passing through. As sunset approaches we give it a more undivided attention. It sets near

the mountain, on the left of it. A small cloud touches the mountain on that side. The mass grows purple, lighter above and diaphanous, the cloud golden. Gradually the sun goes down, attended by no clouds, but with an unbroken golden splendour. The mountain gradually darkens from the base upwards, till it is seen as a majestic cone of purple-black silhouetted against a sky still glowing with the rays of the departed sun, and the cloud—still touching the mountain side—is diminished to a grey speck.

We reach the post-station at Kurask. A family has possession of the usual passengers' room. We are shown into a smaller one, vacated for us by one of the officers of the station. We wait a weary time before we get some fried eggs for supper. My companions propose to sleep in the hot, close room. I have spied an empty wooden bedstead standing out in the courtyard, and prefer laying my blanket on its wooden laths, and pulling my cloak over me, to get what sleep I can, but to get fresh air at all events.

Friday, August 25.—A little before sunrise I climbed out of my wooden bed, and went to look for Ararat. I was a few minutes too late. The sun had not risen upon us mortals, but up in heaven there the snow-peak was already illuminated by his beams. I do not think there had been any rose-tint, I was early enough to have caught lingering traces of it, but I should have liked to see the first ray strike on the snowy peak. Again this morning we travelled with our faces towards the mountain, gradually passing very close by it, so that again I spent the morning in studying it. Very soon after the sun rose a little cloud floated in the wedge of blue heaven which divides the two mountains. Gradually it grew into a long, narrow streak of horizontal cloud, which lay motionless across the higher mountain just at the snow-line. As the sun grew hotter the cloud grew broader and denser; a crown of cirrous cloud which appeared to rise out of the glen between the two mountains hovered over the snowless

peak of lesser Ararat. As the morning advanced the crown grew heavy, and settled down on the lesser peak; and the horizontal cloud across the higher peak threw off fragments, which floated down the wind to the right.

As we journeyed on, gradually passing the mountain on our left, the lesser mountain was gradually disengaged from the greater mass; till, about noon, between the stations Bashmirashin and Serderak, we obtained our finest view. A few trees formed a foreground and measure.* Ararat is not so much a mountain with a double peak, as a twin mountain. The lesser mountain on the left is from this point of view a sharper, steeper cone; its downward curve terminates on the left in rocks, and leads the eye on to a range of hills. It has no snow on its peak, though the ribs of snow on the higher mountain descend far below the level of its height. The greater mountain is a less sudden curve. On the left it is connected with the lesser mountain by a serrated ridge; on the right it slopes down in a grand uninterrupted easy curve, which loses itself in the level surface of the plain. I think the horizontal cloud which has clung to the mountain all day, sometimes so broad that the snowy summit only just appeared above it, is the vapour arising from the melting snow at the snow-line; while the masses of cumuli, which settled thicker and lower on the lesser height, are the vapours drawn up from the glen between the mountains.

After the noon-meal and rest we resumed our journey, and our study of the mountain. The clouds about the

* Little Ararat is 12,840 feet above the sea; the greater Ararat is 16,916 feet. Aralych, the town at the base of the mountain, is 2,600 feet above the sea, so that the actual elevation which the spectator sees is 14,300 feet, "probably the greatest elevation in the world." The radius at the base of the greater cone is about 14 miles; of the lesser 9 miles. The two mountains are wooded to the height of 8,000 feet. The ice-field extends about 2,000 feet down from the higher summit. The perpetual snow-line is at the height of 13,400 feet.—"Caucasus, Persia, and Turkey in Asia." By Baron Max von Thielmann. Translated by C. Heneage, 1875.

lesser Ararat had risen, and the peak was almost clear. The horizontal mass across the greater Ararat had turned into cumuli, which were pressed by a light breeze against the mountain side; most of them pass behind the mountain, but some light fragments are broken off and float, luminous with the sunlight upon them, across the hither face, and reunite, and all drift down the wind together. As the twilight deepens there remains the great purple mountain with a grey spectral light about its summit, where the snow glimmers faintly in the light of the young moon which hangs in heaven just above it.

Stayed at the post station of Kamalia; supped off kabobs, and grapes descended from the vineyards which Noah planted here—whence else could they come? Slept in my cloak on a wooden settle in the entrance lobby of the post-house.

Saturday, August 26.—This morning we drove close under the mountain. There are no cloud effects, and the mountain looks as prosaic under the untempered sunlight as such a mountain can. All its details are clearly visible. It is by no means a smooth cone moulded by the rains out of plastic earths. Its sides are seamed and wrinkled, it throws out spurs into the plain, and on the north-east side there is a vast precipitous chasm from near the summit, which might have formed a dry dock for the ark.

It is the physical grandeur of the mountain and the beauty of its atmospheric phenomena which have chiefly engaged our attention, but no doubt its historical associations have underlain our thoughts all along, and heightened the absorbing interest of the last three days. What a history! "And the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat," freighted with the scanty salvage of the old primeval world, which alone had survived the universal shipwreck of the flood of God's wrath.

"And Noah went forth out of the ark, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him," after that awful

year. They stepped carefully out of "the door of the ark, which was in the side thereof," and took a few paces on the solid ground, and looked round them on the scene which now lies before my eyes. The locality of Eden is lost, but this great "holy place" remains identified so long as the twin mountain remains on its spreading base. And somewhere here about is the place where Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and offered that great sacrifice of the beasts which had been specially reserved for it all the year of the flood. And here God talked with Noah, and made the new covenant with him and with his posterity; and appointed the bow in the cloud (the Nestorians call it "the Bow of God") as the token of the covenant. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground!"

Americans come over to England, to visit the town or the hamlet, the farm or the manor-house, from which their ancestors set out to plant a new family in the new world; hither am I come as to the spot from which the wanderings of my ancestors began. I trace up my pedigree to Him who looked forth from yonder mountain side 4000 years ago, upon a world to whose sovereignty there was no rival claimant. No! no! a thousand times no! It is not Ararat, though encircled with the luminous Bow of God, which I am content to accept as the cradle of my race; Eden, the garden of God's planting, where God used to walk at eventide with my ancestor, is the home from which I am exiled! Not to Noah, grand as is the figure of the one man whose integrity saved him amidst the destruction of a world, but to Adam I trace up my ancestry. I am the son of John, who was the son of William . . . "who was the son of Japhet, who was the son of Noah," truly; but I do not stop there; I continue, "who was the son of Lamech . . . who was the son of Seth, who was the son of Adam, who was the son of God." I stop not short of that

glorious termination: my ancestors dwelt in Eden, in the golden age, and the first of them was of Divine original!

In the afternoon, when we resumed our journey at about five o'clock, the mountain had again put on its splendours, a necklace of fleecy, luminous cloud, and the diaphanous light of the peak. If these are the every-day phenomena of the mountain, there must sometimes be glorious displays of rosy dawns, and gorgeous crimson and gold sunsets, and in winter masses of storm clouds and flashing lightnings and rolling thunder. As we get further round the mountain we find that from the north-west side it throws off a spur from the base of the higher peak, by which it descends into a chain of hills which go off into the far distance.



MOUNT ARARAT.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ERIWAN TO TIFLIS.

THE last part of our day's journey was along roads shaded by trees, and bordered by frequent vineyards. Towards noon we crossed a barren hill, meeting groups of country people in holiday costume, who seemed to be returning from "market day" at Eriwan. We made a long descent down the hill, with the town in full sight on the opposite hill, with a fortress on an elevation, and green domes of mosques; and the river Zenqui flowing in the valley between.

We drove into the post-house, and there deposited our luggage, and had the refreshment of as much washing as can be got out of Eastern appliances. At one we walked round to the Club, which is on one side of the principal square of the town. There is no hotel in the town, but European travellers are welcomed at this institution, which serves for hotel, restaurant, and café. We found the *chef* able and willing to supply us with a comfortable dinner of Russo-German character, to which, however, I was not well enough to do justice. This indisposition, and the short time we had at our disposal, prevented me from trying to see the mosques and the fortress which had attracted our attention on approaching the town.

About three o'clock we were again *en route*. We were told that from Eriwan we should find a good *chaussée*, one of the great military highways which the Russian Government, in imitation of the Roman empire, of which it aspires to be the successor, has made from the heart to the

extremities of its vast territory. It looks as if there had been a disagreement between the local authorities of Eriwan and the imperial authorities as to whose duty it was to complete the last mile of road, but certainly neither of them has done it. It was as bad as if the Turks had had the care of it—pitted with holes, and strewn with boulders; even the troitka had to go at a walk. But after that bit of debatable ground the road was all that had been promised, a good macadamised road in first rate condition, and the troitkas whirled along behind three good horses to the music of their bells. As we rose up the hill above the town, the gardens and houses of the town were at our feet; the vineyards formed a broad belt, which stretched irregularly across the plain; and Ararat, thirty miles off, formed the background of the picture. It was our last sight of it.

On we travelled far into the dark, and stopped at last at the post-station of Suchia Fantanka—the Dry Fountain. The post-house had one room for travellers with two unclean looking couches, which my companions were not afraid to occupy. After trying to appease my hunger on the yolks of two under-boiled eggs and black bread, I asked for my bed, and was shown into a second room inhabited in two corners by two separate groups, perhaps members of the postmaster's family, and invited to sleep on the stone floor in a third vacant corner. It reminded one of the room in a London lodging-house, where each corner was let to a separate family, with a single man in the middle of the room, and one of the party told a shocked district visitor that they were all very comfortable till the gentleman in the middle took in a lodger. In answer to a vigorous remonstrance, they found an old wooden bedstead somewhere and dragged it into my corner. I laid my blanket on the boards, and covered myself with my cloak, and did not get a wink of sleep for hours! "Why not?" Fleas!! mosquitoes!!! sand flies!!!! and I don't know what

besides, attacked face and feet and hands and body. Ugh!

August 27.—Rose *very* early in the morning, glad to leave my uncomfortable couch. We had told the postmaster that we desired to start by sunrise, but no one was stirring in the house. I accordingly went round and knocked loudly at all the doors, and holloaed, until I made the postmaster turn out, looking very cross. I insisted upon having the horses put to at once, would not wait for breakfast, but set off out of our wretched quarters at once. We were soon up among the mountains again, driving through the pure fresh air at a rapid pace, and speedily forgot the disagreeables of the night. At the first post-house we stopped for breakfast. In the course of the morning we came to a village built after the European instead of the Eastern fashion: instead of blank mud walls with no opening but the door, there were doors and windows. I remember how the first sight of the Egyptian villages struck us; it was curious that in two months we had grown so accustomed to the Oriental type that this first return to European fashions struck us with a sense of novelty and interest.

Our road led us some miles along the heights above Lake Goktscha, another of the series of salt lakes, of which the Caspian is the greatest, and Wan and Oroomiah are other examples. Goktscha is equal in size to the largest of the Swiss lakes, and is over 6,000 feet above the sea; it is surrounded by mountains, which are not very striking in their forms; and again we had to notice how the absence of verdure on the earth, and of clouds in the sky, and of perspective in the atmosphere, injured the pictorial effect of the scenery. There was one picturesque point, in the monastery of Siwanga, which is situated on a small islet a very little way from the shore. A boat full of people were returning across the quiet lake, and we saw others on the shore of the lake, who were doubtless returning from Divine service at the church of the monastery.

After leaving the lake behind, we came to a picturesque village of timber houses, and soon after began to descend ; a beautiful country lay before us—a country of bold hills beautifully wooded with oak and beech, with deep valleys between ; behind the hills, lofty downs, rolling wave above wave ; and behind and above the downs a boundary of mountains rising up to heaven, with deep ravines and lofty peaks. It is the forest of Genesia, a magnificent scene, and would make a domain for a prince. We rattled down the steep mountain side by twenty zig-zags, and along one of the dells till we came to an open valley where two of the mountain streams meet, and at their confluence is the straggling town of Dilijen.

Monday, August 28.—Next morning again the scenery was magnificent for the whole stage of fifteen miles. We were winding down through bold lofty hills wooded from base to summit, with narrow glens between and sandstone cliffs ; then we came into a winding pass through a limestone country, rounded masses standing out from the wooded hill-sides like towers, and crowning the heights like a fortification. It reminded me of the scenery of the Wye, with this difference, the hills and rocks here are on a much larger scale, but the scene lacks the full-flowing tide of the Wye ; the river here is represented by a shallow, lively trout stream. Altogether the scenery, of which Dilijen is the centre, is glorious, and in England it would be one of our most popular touring grounds.

By mid-day we had got fairly out of the hill country, and stopped to change horses at a post-house in the plain. The postmaster had eleven horses in his stable, but he had received an order to reserve horses for some Russian general who was expected along the road, and he refused to send us on. We tried backshish and bullying in vain. We had to kick our heels in the vile post-house for more than three hours—from two till past five—when the postmaster professed to suppose that his general would not

come to-day and let us have our horses, and away we went across the plain.

Passed through a scattered village of subterranean houses. All that could be seen above ground was a small semi-dome, like that of a Koord tent in shape, but made of earth. This formed the entrance porch to the hut, burrowed out under the level plain. On and on we drove through the dark, trying to make up for the time we had lost; and at past ten o'clock at night halted for the last time at a posting-house. After supper I turned out of doors, laid my blanket on the wooden floor of the porch for a bed, pulled my cloak over me for a covering, and slept.

Let me say a few general words on this short experience of Russian travelling. The road we traversed, which is the great military road through the lately annexed Trans-Caucasian province, is excellent; the posting arrangements are very well conducted; the troitka indeed is not a very comfortable vehicle, but it is not very uncomfortable; the horses are good, and the pace is admirable. The stages are long—ten, twelve, fifteen miles—and the traveller may make as many or as few of them in the day as he pleases; beginning at dawn and travelling into the night he may get over a great deal of ground. There is no temptation to linger on the road. The post-houses are sometimes in a village, but quite as often they stand alone by the roadside, and the accommodation they offer is vile. There are usually two rooms appropriated to travellers, the rest of the building being the private residence of the postmaster and his family. Each public room has two couches, a small table, and a chair or two. The floor is filthy, the couches usually swarm with vermin, the atmosphere is frowzy and sickening. For food there is always the samavar with its boiling water, and good tea, a dish of fried eggs and brown bread, and sometimes in a village, in the season, the traveller may send out and buy fine fruit at a very cheap rate. Nothing much to complain

of in fine weather, you need not sit or sleep in the house, and fried eggs are wholesome and nourishing food ; but in cold rainy weather it must be terribly bleak across these open plains, and to sleep in the post-house night after night must entail very serious inconveniences ; and a diet of fried eggs becomes monotonous after a fortnight or so.

Tuesday, August 29.—Got off in good time, made a stage before breakfast, made our tenth consecutive meal of eggs and tea. Another stage took us into Tiflis by one o'clock ; drove to the Hotel d'Europe, and found ourselves once more in the bosom of civilisation.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

TIFLIS.

THE town of Tiflis stands in a basin surrounded by hills; the river Kur, a broad stream, and after rain a voluminous one, flows through the middle of the town. On the side on which we entered there are a series of great water-wheels erected by the river-side, each of which, turned by the stream, raises water, which is conveyed by a trough into the adjoining garden and keeps it constantly and thoroughly watered. In the middle of the town one bank of the river rises into a rocky cliff crowned by houses with picturesque effect; a ruined castle crowns a rocky elevation which overlooks the town;* half-way up one of the hill-sides which enclose the town is built a small church on a ledge of rock. The whole town has a fine effect.

It is divided into two quarters. The old town, a maze of narrow streets divided into the Armenian bazaar and the Persian bazaar, &c., is very picturesque, and filled with a very mixed population—Georgians in their round fur caps, Armenians both in native and European costume, Circassians in their handsome military-looking dress, Persians in the tall hat which easily distinguishes them, Russian officers in uniform, Europeans in frock coats, and peasants in all kinds of nondescript habits. The Russian quarter is like a part of a European city. It is the capital of the Trans-Caucasian province of the Russian empire. The Grand Duke Michael has here a handsome palace, and of course

* There is a good view of it in Stackelberg's *Le Caucase Pittoresque*, pl. xxiv.

the officers and civil *employés* have their houses in this quarter ; there are also three good hotels, theatre, public gardens, museum, shops, &c., and open street carriages, of the same kind and quite as good as those of Brighton. There is, lastly, a large German colony here, which chiefly inhabits a separate suburb.

We had hoped to reach here so as to stay one night and proceed next day by rail to catch the steamer from Poti to Trebizond and Constantinople, but on our arrival we were told that the direct steamer had been requisitioned by Government in view of the warlike preparations against Turkey, and we had to wait four days for the next boat, which went round by the Crimea to Odessa, whence we should get another steamer to Constantinople.

This gave us a few days' rest at Tiflis, which was very acceptable. The contrast was very sudden. We had been travelling hard for a fortnight, living on eggs and tea, sleeping in the open air. We found ourselves transferred at once from the filthy discomfort of a Russian post-house to a Parisian hotel. Our breakfast had been the inevitable fried eggs and tea ; our dinner was selected from a carte of thirty or forty dishes, and we went to bed in a four-poster with sheets and pillows ! But we soon found that barbarism has its compensating advantages. The bed was hot, and the air of the room heavy and sultry, and the pillows uncomfortable, and the noises of the hotel and of the town kept one awake. I would gladly have turned out of bed and bedroom and wrapped myself in my blanket and slept, as on so many previous nights, in the pure air, under the stars, listening to the wind sighing and the birds chirping as they awoke on their roosts.

When we parted from our Nestorian friends at Tabriz they charged me with a batch of letters for friends in Tiflis, and this reminds me to mention another curious incident among my Eastern experiences. I have told how we were amused with the tricks of a professional jester, and became

intimate with a prophet, and saw a train of maimed, halt, blind, and sick on their journey to a reputed worker of miracles, but here I found myself put into relations with a false Christ. There is now living near Acre a man who professes to be Christ returned to earth again. At Seir one of his followers paid me a visit, and I had an unsatisfactory conversation with him ; for there is no dealing with a man who explains Scripture according to mystical canons of his own making, and who accepts his unreasonable fancies as inspired intuitions. Among the letters given me at Tabriz for delivery here was one addressed to this false Christ from one of his followers—it was thought that I might conclude my travels with a visit to the Holy Land, and I was begged to take such steps as might be possible to get it forwarded. If I had had the opportunity I confess that I should have used the letter as a means of introduction to so remarkable a personage. As the fact stands, the letter is still in my possession. I do not know who was the writer, and cannot return it to him ; I am unwilling to send it by post to its destination. Either party may have it, the seal unbroken, if they will apply to me for it ; but meantime it lies among the curiosities of my Eastern journey, and not, I think, the least curious of them.

The letters of which I was the bearer brought me into communication with some Nestorians at Tiflis, and thus I became aware of the fact, of which no previous intimation had been given me, that there is here a considerable Nestorian population. The poorer Nestorians go in large numbers to Russia much as the Irish used to come to England at harvest-time, in search of work ; and some of them settle in Russia ; about Eriwan, for example, there are two or three Nestorian villages, and about Tiflis others. These settled Nestorians have for the most part conformed to the Russian Church.

Tiflis is the centre of the floating Nestorian population.

Here I was told there are as many as 5,000 of them, chiefly sojourners of the poorest class, who stay six months, a year, or two years, and then return to Oroomiah and Koordistan; but some have settled here, and some of these are in a higher social position—*e.g.*, merchants in the bazaar, &c. I made the acquaintance of some of these Tiflis Nestorians, and found that they had lately formed a committee for the purpose of establishing here some kind of training college in which promising young Nestorians might receive the earlier part of their education, thence be transferred to Europe for some years, and then return as teachers of their own countrymen. They purposed to send agents over Russia and Europe to collect the funds necessary for the establishment and maintenance of this scheme. The committee was good enough to hold a special meeting to hear a report from me of the object and results of my journey. I ventured also to suggest what seemed to me the objections to their plan in any case, and the special objection to their prosecuting it in the event of a college being established in Koordistan. I understood them in reply to express gratitude at the prospect of the establishment in Koordistan of such an institution as they had been contemplating, and that they came to a resolution to suspend all further action with respect to their own plans, and intimated a willingness to give what aid they could in support of those which their people generally had adopted.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

TIFLIS TO CONSTANTINOPLE.

WE had arrived in Tiflis on Tuesday, August 29. We stayed there on Wednesday and Thursday, and on Friday morning started by rail for Poti.

The rail followed the course of the river, and gave us glimpses of rafts of timber being floated down the stream, as on the Rhine ; old towns and villages by the river-side ; a round tower here and there on the bank ; castles, churches, hermitages on the heights. It was very tantalising to catch just a glimpse of places of evidently great interest with the certainty that one would never see them again.

As we proceeded, the hills began to close in upon the narrowing valley ; the railway began to wind up into the hills with steep gradients. Then the hills become well wooded ; the valley becomes a mere ravine, and the river a mountain torrent. Then the hills become lofty and bold, and the scenery wild and grand. We see a village here and there built of great logs of wood with projecting galleries, something like the Swiss chalêts. To avoid tunnels and bridges, the railway winds round the hills, and shows us all the scenery to advantage.

Presently we notice that the stream is running with us ; we have, then, just crossed the water-shed, left the head waters of the Kur, which guided us up to its source, and now we have taken the waters of the river Rion for our guide down the other side of the Suram mountains and across Mingrelia to the Black Sea. Still we travel by narrow defiles through lofty, bold, well-wooded hills,

with occasional bold walls of limestone cliff. A little past the water-shed we catch sight of a large country house romantically situated among the bold wooded hills, which I think must be Borshom, the villa of the Grand Duke Michael. The valley gradually widens, affluents from the lateral ravines swell the volume of the river, till we come once more into a broad valley of arable fields.

The twilight deepens into night, but there is a moon nearly full, and we catch glimpses of the weird-looking forest, the virgin swampy forest of Mingrelia through which the river and the railway run for five-and-twenty miles to Poti. We pull up at last where the full, slow river flows out of the marshy, tangled forest, and glides on between low tongues of land into a glassy creek, which finally opens into the sea.

It is near midnight. We gather our things together, get into an open carriage, and are driven across a bridge into the town of Poti. It is a very recent creation of the Russian Government. The houses are all quite new, and built on piles; but we found a sufficiently comfortable hotel, and a good supper ready for us, and went to bed without much apprehension, notwithstanding the reputation of Poti that no European sleeps there without catching low fever. We felt that we had already paid our dues to the climate, and might go to sleep with a good conscience.

All this region of swamp and forest is classic land, for it is the land of the Golden Fleece. Jason steered his Argonauts over the shallow bar and up the slow stream of the Rion. All the journey we have travelled is classic ground. It has been for centuries the route from the Black Sea to the Caspian. In the time of Justinian it was proposed to carry the Indian trade across the Caspian to the mouth of the Kur, and up the Kur so far as the river was navigable; then by a portage through the ravines through which the railway runs, till it could be launched

again upon the waters of the Rion, and carried down to Poti and so to Constantinople and the west.

Saturday, September 2.—Left Poti about nine, *en route* for Odessa. The Russian steamer was a fine vessel, with even better accommodation and arrangements than the French Messageries steamers. We had calm weather, and had nothing to do but to lounge on deck, and read, and rest body and mind in a charming *dolce far niente*.

Sunday, September 3.—Touched at Theodosia, where we landed and walked about the town. Looked into the church—a spacious structure, clean and cared for. A priest with a wonderful deep bass voice was intoning prayers; the responses were very effectively sung by three voices in harmony; a few people worshipping. The whole was reverent and impressive.

Monday, September 4.—Touched at Yalta, the fashionable watering-place of the Crimea, but had not time to go ashore. As seen from the sea the country is charming—rocky, wooded hills, and picturesque glens winding down to the sea; villas lining the beach, and dotted about among the woods.

Touched at Sebastopol, but again had not time to go ashore. We entered the harbour between two formidable-looking batteries, and noted others lining the shore; but on the whole, to my unmilitary eyes, the fortifications did not look so imposing as I had expected, or the traces of the bombardment so evident as the accounts of travellers had led me to suppose.

Tuesday, September 5.—Arrived at Odessa early. Landed and had breakfast, and then walked about the town. It is a fine town, with new streets of good houses, and boulevards broad, straight, planted with trees, looking more like a first-class watering-place than a commercial sea-port.

Left again in the afternoon in a smaller but well-appointed steamer with only one other first-class passenger; it was like cruising in one's own yacht. Before dinner

was quite over our lady fellow-traveller asked if we gentlemen objected to smoking, and being assured that we did not, took out her tobacco bag and book of papers, dexterously made a cigarette, and puffed away with a gusto which proved her enjoyment of the luxury which English ladies think so unfeminine, but which Russian ladies seem generally to indulge in.

Wednesday, September 6.—We arrived about eleven o'clock in the Bosphorus, off Therapia, and instead of pushing on for another hour into the Golden Horn, we were obliged by the Government regulations to anchor there for the night.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

Thursday, September 7.—At sunrise we weighed anchor and finished our short course to Constantinople. On each side of the narrow strait low hills rise with a gradual slope from the water, well wooded, with winding glens between. Every here and there is a village of good houses, and villas are scattered along the margin of the water, and nestle among the woods on the hillside. The European side especially is picturesque in its natural features, and rich in handsome waterside villages and rural palaces. The straits between are studded with shipping, from the great Turkish ironclad war steamers down to the caique with a single pair of oars. As we steamed down the straits the rising sun illuminated this European side, and the panorama was beautiful. Very shortly we turned to the right into the Golden Horn—the Frank quarter of Pera being on our right, Stamboul, the ancient city of Constantine and capital of the Greek empire, on our left. The dragoman of Missiri's Hotel came on board and took charge of landing our luggage, passed it through the Custom-house by help of a bribe, administered with no affectation of concealment on either side, and we soon found ourselves in our hotel.

We stayed at Constantinople four days ; but the greater part of two days I spent in going to Therapia in search of our ambassador, with whom I had business to transact. Two days I had a slight attack of fever ; still we saw a good deal of the general aspect of Constantinople, and I am very thankful to have seen it. It deserves all that has been said about its wonderful situation and its external beauty.

At Urfa we saw the illuminations in honour of the accession of Sultan Murad; here we saw Sultan Hamed go in state to the mosque of Eyoob to be invested with the sword of Islam. We hired a boat and were rowed down the Golden Horn. The panorama of Stamboul is magnificent; I know nothing to compare with it. The arm of the sea called the Golden Horn is bounded on the south by a chain of five low hills, which slope down with an easy curve to the water's edge. The houses of the city rise one above another up these slopes, largely interspersed with trees and gardens, with here and there a dome and minaret, and each height is crowned by a great monumental building. Beginning on the left, there is first the Seraglio, with its towers and cypresses, then Sta. Sophia, the mosque of Suleiman, the mosque of Mahmoud, each group of buildings crowned with its dome and flanked with its minarets. And this forms the background to the gleaming arm of the sea covered with shipping. The north side of the Horn is not so wonderfully beautiful, but it does not disgrace its *vis à vis*; the houses rise up the hill-sides which bound it, interspersed with trees, and diversified with several domes; the great building of the Seraskieriate by the waterside, at the upper end of the Horn, and the Tower of Galata crowning the hill at the lower end, give it dignity.

We rowed down the course, which was already marked out by men-of-war's boats for the imperial procession, and landed at a waterside café at the upper part of the Horn, whence we got a fair view of the water. The state caiques were very handsome, long, narrow boats, pulled by twelve to fifty rowers. The style of rowing is very remarkable; the men rise to their feet with one foot on the bench in front to get the first part of the stroke, and fall back on their seats and lie well back to pull the last part of the stroke through. The rowers of the Sultan's caique did something still more extraordinary, for they did not merely pull the oar up to the breast, but while lying back in the way above

described, they passed their hands over the head as far as they could reach backwards in order to lengthen the stroke. The boats were handsomely carved and gilded, the uniforms of the rowers gay and quaint, and the gala dresses of the great personages dazzling, and the whole pageant interesting. We saw the Sultan land, and caught a glimpse of him as he rode through the street, surrounded by his guards, towards the mosque.

The exterior of Sta. Sophia is not very striking; the lower part of the building has little architectural pretension; the drum seems to be too short, so that it does not lift the dome sufficiently above the building, and the row of windows round the base of the dome looks like part of the drum and reduces the visible and effective part of the dome to a comparatively small segment of an ellipse. The interior, however, is very fine. The narthex is a vast hall, worthy to be the entrance to such a church. The interior is very grand, with its vast space, its expansive dome, and its noble design. Its historical interest is transcendent. That it was built by Justinian is one of its modern claims to historical interest, for Justinian gathered for it the gems from some of the greatest buildings of classical antiquity. These eight porphyry pillars were part of the Roman temple of the Sun of Aurelian, which the Roman patrician Marina received as her dowry, and made over to Justinian to be incorporated in his church. These two columns of green granite, which support the women's gallery, came from Ephesus, and are said to have formed part of the Temple of Diana. Look at the mosaics of the domes and walls, greatly injured alas! Look at the beautifully carved Byzantine capitals and cornices. Above all look, as long as leisure will allow you, at the grand general effect of the vast and noble interior with its overhanging dome, and call to mind while you gaze the persons and the scenes which have been witnessed here.

We were not able to give more than a glance at the other

great mosques. The Mosque of Suleiman and that of Ahmed are very grand buildings, and I think that of the Valide Sultana, near the waterside at the end of the old bridge, struck me equally for its architectural merit.

It is only fair to warn the traveller that Missiri's Hotel does not at all deserve the fine things said of it in "Murray's Handbook." On the contrary, though the charge per day is very high, the whole *ménage* is parsimonious, the service supercilious; the whole thing such an intolerable trading on its past reputation and the recommendation still published by Murray, that I did what I never did in my life before, I called for my bill, packed my portmanteau, and had myself taken to another hotel. At the Hotel de Byzance, where the charges were less than at Missiri's, we found a well-conducted hotel.

Whilst staying in Cairo on our outward voyage we had heard that the dancing dervishes were to be seen at a certain hour on Fridays, and resolved to see them on our return from the Pyramids. But, alas! the fatigue of climbing, together with the heat, quite drove the dancing dervishes out of our heads, and we only remembered them as we arrived at the hotel door on our return, and we were then told that by that time they had just finished their performance. Again we were told that they were going to exhibit in Constantinople, and we again settled to go and see them, but with a like result, we only remembered them just as they had finished. But W. was fortunate enough to come upon an exhibition of them quite unexpectedly on another day, and the following is his description of their performance :—

"The place where the performance took place was a large round room, the middle of which was enclosed with railings; above there was a circular gallery. I, however, remained down-stairs, as I could get a better sight from below.

"At the end of the enclosed circle opposite to the

entrance the chief of the dervishes stood, with a carpet in front of him; he was dressed in green, with a tall fawn-coloured hat bound round with green also; all round the circle stood the performers in loose white dresses, and with a hat of the same colour and shape as the chief's, but without the green shawl or handkerchief round it. I was not in time to see the very first part of the performance, but I suspect that it was very much the same all the way through. When I got in I heard a tom-tom playing, and sometimes also a kind of flute. I believe there were thirteen of the dancers, forming a circle, with one in the middle, all with their heads on one side, and their arms extended, spinning round on their toes as fast as they could go, their long white dresses spreading out round them in a circle. One young fellow I noticed in particular; he went round much faster than the others, and had his head more on one side; his eyes were turned up, showing the whites of his eyes, and I think I really never saw anything so absurd in my life. Suddenly the tom-tom ceases and they all immediately cease dancing, and let their white robes coil round them, then they all fold their arms across their chests and march past the chief, each man as he passes the chief bowing low, with his face not turned towards the chief but in the same direction as he is walking, so that when he bows he presents his side to the chief. The chief slightly acknowledges their bow as they go past; the man in the centre of the circle passes him first, and then when the last man has passed he, the last man, slowly circles off into the centre, unwinding his robes gradually as he goes; then the tom-tom strikes up and they all begin to turn again slowly unwinding their robes with the circular motion until they get their robes fairly out; then they spin round faster and faster, the whole circle also gradually going round the room until the last man has reached the place next the chief, then they all stop again and go through the same

process again. This appeared to me to be done thirteen times, so that every one of them came in his turn into the middle of the circle. When this had been accomplished they all stopped again and knelt down, all shutting their eyes; their attendants went round and put their cloaks on each of their shoulders, which being pulled on the chief knelt on his carpet and apparently prayed aloud, all the others having bent with their faces touching the ground; when this prayer was over they all rose, and again defiled past the chief, this time kissing his hand as they passed; he apparently said something to them, and also kissed them. The chief then walks slowly towards the exit, and when he reaches it turns round in the most solemn manner and bows to the circle of performers, who stand round with their arms crossed on their breasts, and they bow low in return; the chief having departed they all walk out without any further ceremony, joining with the lookers-on, and so take their departure."

My impression was that the dancing dervishes were mere vulgar fanatics. The chaplain tells us that it is not so. There are different kinds of dervishes, and they bear something like the same relation to Islam which the friars bore to the Church in the middle ages. The ascetic, the enthusiastic, as well as the fanatical minds, among Mohammedan peoples, are to be found in the ranks of the dervishes. Many of them, it is believed, are very unorthodox, and curious relics of ancient Eastern beliefs are retained among them. The ceremonies which W. saw are supposed to have an astronomical theory as their basis, and the gyrations to represent the motions of the heavenly bodies.

I shall not trouble the reader with our return journey through Europe. We reached home again after an interval of just five months, and owe great gratitude to God that He had brought us through a very adventurous journey with success and safety, and that all things had gone well in home and parish during our absence.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE EASTERN QUESTION.

SINCE my return home I have, of course, been frequently asked for opinions on the "Eastern Question." I have replied that a hasty ride across the country does not qualify one to speak with much personal knowledge of the condition of its inhabitants. Nevertheless, when pressed, I have admitted that a traveller whose attention is specially directed to one point, who converses confidently on the spot with those who have for years or always lived there, and who used all his opportunities of personal observation, may in the course of four or five months arrive at some reliable conclusions on the broad facts of the question which he has specially studied. The point which I studied was the condition of the Christians under the rule of Turkey and Persia; and when asked for the conclusions I arrived at on this subject I have stated them in something like the following words.

The difference of religion between the Mussulman and the Christian has drawn a broad line between the two portions of the population. The Mussulman hates the Christian with a fanatical hatred as a Giaour—an infidel. It is a point of conscience not to admit him to an equality of civil rights; to kill him may involve temporal inconveniences, but is meritorious in the sight of heaven. It is the old feeling of the Crusader towards the "paynim," or the Spaniard towards the Moor, or the mediæval Christian or the modern Russian towards the Jew.

This religious antagonism has kept alive, almost in

their first keenness, the relations of the conquering and the conquered race. The Mussulman despises the Christians as an inferior and subject race, and continues to beat them, or to plunder them, or to ill-treat their women, on occasion, as part of the rights of conquest. The Christian fears the Mussulman, whose oppression he is powerless to resist, and hates him with the hatred produced by the wrongs of centuries. The Christians are continually sustaining wrongs in person and property, sometimes at the hands of the local officials, but more commonly by the lawless acts of their neighbours; the great cause of complaint against the authorities is that they fail to give either protection or redress.

The oppression of our co-religionists in Persia is worse than in Turkey; the government is worse, the officials are more corrupt, and therefore the condition of the Christians is more hopeless.

It is very difficult to see how this is to be amended. The impression left on my mind by all I saw and heard was that the central government at Constantinople is far in advance of the people. Its officials have had, more or less, a European education, and seek to govern on nineteenth century European principles. The Porte would willingly place its Christian subjects on the same level of political and social rights as its Mohammedan subjects. But all the endeavours of the Porte to protect its Christian subjects and ameliorate their condition, are in opposition to the religious prejudices, the established customs, and the strong feelings of the Mussulmans. In Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and Koordistan, and it is only of those countries that I am speaking, the Mussulmans are the great majority of the people; and the government of the Porte is not strong enough to enforce its good intentions.

I can only see two modes of applying a remedy for the oppressions of the Christians in Asia Minor. One is the Russian mode: the destruction of the Turkish empire by

conquest, and the substitution for it of a Christian government powerful enough to control the Mussulman majority by force of arms. The principle of this method is the old Crusading principle. There are manifest objections to it. If there were not, the governments of Europe are not disposed to allow a Crusade against the Turk whose result would be to give a preponderance of power in Europe to a semi-barbarous, absolute, military monarchy, like Russia. I fear that before Russia, if allowed, had completed this method of protecting the Christians of Asia, a general massacre would have left very few Christians to be protected.

The other mode is the English mode: to use all our influence with the Sultan and the Shah on behalf of their Christian subjects; to barter every aid we give their governments for concessions to our co-religionists.

It is a slow method, because it depends so largely upon the production of a change in the temper of a fanatical majority towards an oppressed minority, which must be a gradual operation.

Two suggestions might be made for the improvement of this mode of procedure. One is to have a larger number of consuls scattered over the country. They are a wonderful protection to the Christian population about them, both against acts of popular violence and against official neglect of their wrongs. In the neighbourhood of a consul such things are not successfully hushed up. If the local officials give no redress, the consul brings the matter to the knowledge of his ambassador, the ambassador applies pressure to the Porte, the Porte coerces its local representative. Few things so much excited my admiration as the way in which the presence of an Englishman of character, even if he hold no official position, acts as a protection to the people about him. The interests of the Eastern Christians would be materially served by the creation of a few more consulates. At least those which exist might

be kept filled. Two of those to which the Nestorian Christians especially look for protection were simultaneously vacant at the time of my visit to them, and had been vacant, one for a year and a half, and the other for a still longer period.

Another way of promoting the interests of these Eastern Christians is not by political but by religious agency. But this view of the question will be better approached in a separate chapter.



CHAPTER XL.

THE EASTERN CHURCHES.

THE ancient British Church derived its Christianity from the East by way of Gaul, and our English Christianity has retained traces of that Eastern origin to the present day. But throughout the mediæval period our relations were with the Western Church. As the Eastern communities gradually wasted under the Mohammedan conquests and persecutions, and the Western Church grew with the growing population and civilisation of the nations of Europe, the fortunes of Eastern Christianity attracted less and less of our attention.

The Reformation altered our relations with the Latin Church to those of antagonism ; and the controversy which we have ever since had to maintain with Rome has absorbed us. The Eastern Churches misunderstood the position which we then took up ; and we took no pains to make ourselves understood by, or to cultivate relations with, them.

But of late years our interest in the fortunes of those communities of Eastern Christians has been awakened, and their attention has been attracted to us.

The growth of the Anglican Communion, in the United States and in our Colonies, is attaining to such proportions as to affect the centre of gravitation of the Christian Church, so long fixed in Rome, and to commence a new era in the history of the Church. The Pan-Anglican Synod—about to hold a second session—is a symptom of the tendency towards a systematic confederation (in other words a regular ecclesiastical organisation) of this great communion, to which circumstances are impelling us. This increased and more widely-spread power is naturally bringing with

it wider relations, new duties, increased responsibilities. Among other things the Eastern Churches are beginning to understand our ecclesiastical position, to recognise us as an ancient orthodox branch of the Church of Christ, to see in this powerful Anglican Communion a natural ally against Rome and a possible protector against the Mohammedan, and to appeal to us for sympathy and aid.

We, on the other hand, are beginning to see that with the decay of the Mohammedan powers there is springing up the possibility of a great political future for these Eastern Christians. Moreover, a very little study of their history shows us that the existence of those ancient independent portions of the Church is one of the strongest arguments against the pretensions of Rome to universal sovereignty, and that their growth in numbers, energy, and political weight will help to restore the balance of the constitution of the Church, by reducing the comparative preponderance of Rome, and replacing her in her normal position of one among the branches of the Sacred Vine.

Rome is aware of all this, and is making great exertions to win the allegiance of these Eastern churches. Zealous priests and sisters of mercy are labouring with admirable skill and energy throughout the East, ecclesiastical intrigue and political influence (especially of France) are everywhere at work to further the interests of Rome.

Therefore the great English religious instinct of opposition to the designs of Rome, and the great political question of the day "the Eastern Question," combine to give us a great and growing interest in the Christianity of the East, and incline us to give a favourable ear to the overtures which are made to us from thence. Let us briefly glance at the actual position of these Eastern communities.

The bodies of Eastern Christians are—

The Orthodox Eastern Church, the representative of the Church of the Eastern Roman empire, the centre of whose organisation is the Patriarch of Constantinople. The

Russian branch of this Church in the reign of Peter the Great established its national independence of the See of Constantinople. Still more recently the Church of the Greek kingdom, that of Bulgaria, and that of Servia have, under Russian patronage, asserted a similar independence.

The Armenian Church is the next in importance, numbering about five millions of a highly intelligent, enterprising, commercial people. Politically they have long since ceased to be a nation, they are divided between the sovereignty of Russia and Turkey. Ecclesiastically, they acknowledge the See of Etchmiadzin as the centre of their organisation.

The ancient Church of Antioch is represented by a few thousand so-called Jacobites, monophysites in doctrine, under the ecclesiastical rule of a patriarch, who retains the grand historic title of Patriarch of Antioch, but resides at Mardin in Mesopotamia.

The ancient Church of Alexandria is represented by a few hundred thousand Coptic Christians, who are also monophysites. The ancient Abyssinian Church also exists, though in a state of great ignorance and degradation.

Lastly, the Assyrian Christians, who have been described in the foregoing pages, are the descendants and representatives, as we have shown above, of the ancient Church of the further East.

At this moment there is a more active and friendly correspondence between each of these bodies (except the Abyssinian Church) and the English Church than at any previous period in the history of Christendom, at least since the first ages.

Many of our readers will be aware that for several successive years an annual conference has met at Bonn, in connection with the Old Catholic movement, attended by representatives of the Orthodox Eastern, the Russian, and the English Churches; the object of the conferences being to examine the questions which keep these several branches of the Church apart, and to search for bases on which intercommunion among them might be restored.

A committee exists in Russia, and we believe a corresponding committee in England, whose object is the restoration of communion between the two Churches.

One of the most distinguished prelates of the national Church of Greece, the Archbishop of Syra and Tenos, was in England in 1870, and entered into the most friendly relations with our English Bishops, and the Bishops of that Church have received our English Bishop of Gibraltar with equal cordiality.

Clergymen of our own Church have been admitted to take part in the celebration of Holy Communion by prelates of the Servian Church.

A committee is sitting in London now to consider a recent communication from the prelates of the Bulgarian Church, which seeks sympathy, information, and counsel.

A similar committee has been formed to entertain communications from the Armenian Church.

The Patriarch of the Jacobites came to England in 1874 to make known to the English Church the condition of his community, and to seek sympathy and assistance.

The repeated applications of the so-called "Nestorian" Church are related in the preceding pages.

There are a hundred other indications of the interest which the Churches of the world are beginning to take in the Church of England, and of their inclination to enter into more friendly relations with her. Some approach her as equals, seeking nothing but friendship with her, some of the smaller communities who are poor, ignorant, and oppressed, approach her as suppliants asking the help which one Christian may rightly seek of another, and which one Church may seek of another Church on the same grounds of Christian charity.

It was long since pointed out that the Church of England afforded a centre round which the several sections of Christendom might one day rally ; it looks as if the movement towards this centre were already beginning.

What is our duty under these circumstances ? Surely it is on one hand to continue to hold firmly what we believe to be the Catholic faith ; to seek to win back our own Nonconformists ; and to strengthen the relations between the Anglican Churches ; on the other hand, to enter into the friendliest possible relations with all other branches of the Church, to encourage mutual explanations, and promote the general desire for reunion.

This might be greatly promoted by placing some sound, well-read English clergymen among these various communities to represent the Church of England ; and the fittest position in which to place them would be as chaplains to the various consulates. I know the difficulties—that a late Government struck off the consular chaplains, that the House of Commons would not be likely to vote stipends, and so on. But it is possible that the Church of England might find them stipends, and the Government might give them recognition. In any case, it seems to me a wise thing to do, and that I only fulfil a duty in saying so.

But what answer are we to give to these Jacobites and Nestorians, who ask us for material help ? They are in formal heresy ; our branch of the Church, recognising the general councils which they repudiate, cannot enter into communion with them. Can we in conscience help them ?

Even if we were certain that they would always continue unorthodox, yet surely it is our duty, if it is in our power, to interpose to prevent the Mohammedans from persecuting them to extinction. What they definitely ask is help to educate themselves ; surely, even if they continue unorthodox, it is better that they should be intelligent and well educated, rather than ignorant, superstitious, and degraded ; besides, we have a right to hope that they may abandon their errors.

The long depression of their separated communities may have produced in them a disposition to listen favourably to the teaching of the rest of Christendom, on those points on which they separated from it ; especially when

the Church of England, which, like themselves, is divided from the rest of Christendom on so many points of opinion and ritual, assures them that we agree with the rest of Christendom in those great points of doctrine.

In the case of the Nestorians two successive Archbishops of Canterbury have resolved that it is proper to give them aid, as the document subjoined will show.*

The object of the writer's mission to them was to ascertain on the spot how this aid could best be given. He found that the people themselves desired help to establish an institution in which their schoolmasters might be trained,

* Appeal on behalf of the Christians of Assyria, commonly called the Nestorians. [Issued by the present Archbishop of Canterbury, dated Jan. 7, 1870.]

The ancient and once flourishing community, commonly known by the name of Nestorians . . . have recently appealed for help to the Church of England. The appeal . . . has already been published in full [in the introductory chapter of this book], but its purport may be succinctly stated in the following quotation from a speech in reference to it by the late Archbishop Longley :—

“The Nestorians, in this touching letter, say that they feel they are in a state of great ignorance and darkness, and they apply to us to come over and help them—to send some one to instruct and enlighten them. I have reason to believe that they are not at all wedded to Nestorian principles, and that they might easily be led to abandon them. I cannot but hope, therefore, that inasmuch as this appeal has been made to us, there may be some well-disposed people who will contribute to a mission to those poor Eastern Christians. It is a very modest petition that we should send out two missionaries who might bear comfort and consolation to those who are now really in very great distress. Their position is a very painful one. They are between two hostile forces—the Mohammedan on the one hand, and the Papal on the other—and they are persecuted by both. They appeal to us.”

“The claims of these Assyrian Christians [continues the present Archbishop] upon the liberality of English Churchmen are too obvious to require any lengthened exposition. Isolated from the great body of Christendom, they cannot look, like other Eastern Christians, to powerful European protectors. With the exception of one alleged theological error upon a cardinal point—which, however, they disclaim, and are professedly ready to repudiate—they have preserved throughout centuries of severe persecution the primitive creed and doctrine of the Catholic and Apostolic Church. Among them the Eucharistic cup has never been denied to the laity, nor the right of marriage to the priest-

and guidance in the establishment of an improved system of education.

The following extracts from his report to the Archbishop will give a summary of the present educational condition of the people :—

“ Among the mountaineers the present system of education and the machinery for conducting it are both very defective. The educational course consists in learning to read in Old Syriac. Then the scholars read and learn by rote the Psalter, read the Gospels and Epistles, always in Old Syriac, and then having read them they go back and learn to translate them into Modern Syriac. But probably few children continue long enough under tuition to do more than learn to read and say by rote part of the Psalter.

“ The educational machinery among the mountain tribes is of the simplest ; during the winter months the village priest receives at his own house any children who are sent to him as pupils, and is paid by a present according to the means and liberality of the parents. The higher education is effected as in the middle ages in Europe ; the students resort to some teacher who has acquired a reputation for learning ; *e.g.* Rabban Yonan is accounted the most learned man of the nation at present ; the patriarch, several of the bishops, and others of the people who have attained to some degree of education, have been his pupils.

hood ; there is no superstitious use of images or pictures ; purgatory and indulgences are unknown ; while the reading of the Holy Scriptures by all in the vulgar tongue is, as far as their scanty supply of books enables, diligently practised.

“ To our own communion, brought back, through God’s blessing upon the Reformation, to the primitive standard, this ancient body is especially and most reasonably attracted ; and we are anxious that their hopes of obtaining assistance from us may be realised as they ought. . . . The object is not to make proselytes to the English Church, but to aid them in reforming their own Church, where needful, upon a primitive basis and after primitive models.

(Signed)

“ A. CANTUAR.

“ *Stone House, Jan. 7, 1870.*”

“The education of the Oroomiah Nestorians is almost entirely in the hands of the Americans. In about a score of the larger villages where there is the best opening for schools, and where the people are desirous to have them, the Americans have (very wisely) stepped in and offered their aid. I believe they offer to find the teacher and his stipend, if the village will do all the rest. The schools are open only in the winter months. The Nestorians, who are alienated from the present American missionaries, are naturally unwilling to leave the education of the children in their hands.

“There is a considerable desire among them for the establishment of schools of their own ; there are a number of men qualified to teach in them, but they want some one to organise and superintend the working of a system of village schools ; and I think that a clergyman and a trained schoolmaster in the city, and a little help in money, would suffice to create and carry on a system of schools all over the plain, which would do an excellent work among the people.

“As to the future educational scheme, the Patriarch was very decided in desiring that Old Syriac, the classical and not the vulgar language of the nation, should continue to be used as its vehicle. There is an extensive and fine literature in Old Syriac, and no literature in the modern vulgar tongue. The difference between the two was represented as not sufficient to present any great difficulty. I asked, ‘In reading the Psalter, could a person acquainted only with Modern Syriac gather its meaning?’ ‘Often ; there would often be only a few words different.’ ‘How many words?’ ‘Perhaps five in a verse of fifteen words.’ ‘Please read a verse to the servant there’ (having ascertained that he only spoke vulgar Syriac). He read Matthew xxiv. 1, 2, and the servant understood it except one word. In Oroomiah, however, I found the use of Old Syriac deprecated as a great hindrance to education. Books might perhaps be printed in double columns, Old and Modern Syriac.

“All the people with whom I have conversed seem assured that the people will value an improved education, and will send their children in fair numbers and with tolerable regularity to be educated. They seem agreed that the course to adopt is first to establish a central institution where the teachers may be taught and trained, and then to establish schools in the larger villages. There are already a certain number of Nestorians qualified intellectually to aid as schoolmasters, and only needing some training in the methods of education and school management. In the mountains many of the people are too poor to pay regular school fees, and the schools will need to be considerably subsidised. In Oroomiah the people are more able to pay, the chief men of the villages have been in the habit of contributing towards their maintenance, and the schools in their villages will be more nearly, though far from entirely, self-supporting.”

The Patriarch summoned all the bishops, and many of the clergy and chiefs, to a consultation at Kochanes. The conclusions arrived at were embodied in two documents, one from the bishops only, the other from the people generally, both written in Syriac, which I had the honour at once to forward to the Archbishop. Their substance, I believe, will be found to correspond with a memorandum which I made during the meeting, of which the following is a copy :—

“The plan which we think best adapted to our wants, and in which we beg his Grace, the Archbishop, to help us with English clergymen to carry out, is as follows :—

“A training college with a normal school, to be established in some central place which shall be considered most convenient.

“It is hoped that in time branch establishments may be planted in various places (*e.g.*, Oroomiah, Asheetha, Mosul), and it is wished to plant one immediately in the important city of Oroomiah.

“For this purpose we ask for two experienced English clergymen, and one medical man, and two trained school-masters.

“We are anxious to have a printing press, type, &c., that we may supply school-books to the schools, and other books for the use of the people generally.

“Lastly, we beg the Church of England out of its abundance to supply our lack of means to accomplish these plans, which will be so great a blessing to our Church and nation.”

The report upon this plan was briefly as follows :—

“The Nestorian people are a fine race of people, of a natural intelligence and a moral character, which afford abundant promise that anything which your Grace may be pleased to do to help them to educate and elevate themselves (and then perhaps as a consequence to introduce reforms into their Church) will be received with gratitude, will be met by local effort, and will produce great and good results.

“I think the plans which they have suggested are suited to their circumstances, and I hope that it will be possible to carry them out without curtailment. I suppose that about £2,000 a year would be barely sufficient for this purpose. I suppose that the two Societies, S.P.G. and S.P.C.K., would probably, at your Grace’s request, give £500 each for some years, and that the remainder could be raised by the usual appeals to the Church.”

The Societies have given £250 each for five years; the Archbishop is appealing to the Church for the remainder of the necessary sum. We will not doubt that English Churchmen will respond to the appeal, and will at last enable the Archbishop to give a suitable reply to the pathetic entreaties for our Christian sympathy, which have been so often made by this decayed but interesting remnant of a once great and powerful Church.

APPENDIX.

STATISTICS OF THE NESTORIAN DIOCESES.

THE following statistics of the Sees under Mar Shimoon's jurisdiction, with the villages included in them, were obtained in the case of Oroomiah and "the Mattran's country," from the Bishops; in the case of the mountain tribes, from the Priests of the villages, the Maleks, or others who seemed best acquainted with the localities :—

CENTRAL KOORDISTAN.

DIOCESE OF MAR SHIMON, THE PATRIARCH.

Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.	Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.
<i>West of Asheetha in the Mosul Pashalic.</i>				<i>Tyari Alleita, or Upper Tyari.</i>			
Garāmūn	1	2	70	Serspeedho	2	2	50
Tcalluk	1	1	30	Siyadhōr	1	1	7
Arosh	1	0	20	Roomta	1	2	90
Halamoon.....	1	1	60	Chamba d'Be-Elia	..	..	..
Hōr	0	0	10	Chamba d'Nēnē.....	..	..	..
Tciré Rezen	..	..	..	Mezraa	..	..	..
				Mrateetha	..	..	..
<i>Tyari Tahtētha, or Lower Tyari.</i>				Be-Nahra	..	..	..
Asheetha	1	20*	300	Be-Zrāko	..	..	..
Zaweetha	1	12†	90	Jemlātha	..	..	..
Minyānīsh	4	2‡	50	Ania d' Aleelē	..	..	..
Merghé	1	1	70	Doora Allāya	..	..	..
Kurkhe	0	0	20	Rēshē d'Nāhra	..	..	..
Leezan	0	1	50	Kalayātha	1	1	60
Oomra Tahtāya	1	0	0	Be-Dalyātha	..	..	..
Zernl	1	1	30	Mézraa d'Kalayātha ..	..	..	..
Karukhta	0	0	5	Chamba d'Melek	1	2	50
Chamba d' Beth So- } seena	1	1	18	Chamba d'Coordhāyé..	..	..	..
Mātha d'Kasra	2	2	40	Chamba d'Hasso	..	..	..
Be-Zeezo	0	0	12	Malōta d'Melek	..	..	..
Laglipa	1	1	20	Dādosh	1	1	25
Be-Alātha	1	2	38	Mabbuaa	1	1	20
Be-Rawolé	1	2	35	Ko	1	1	27
Shoord	0	0	20	Be-Mariggo	1	1	20
Rawola d'Salabeken ...	1	1	200	Chamba d'Koorkhé....	..	..	..
				Roma Smoka	0	0	2
				Drawa d'Walto	1	1	20
				Chamba Hadtha	..	..	..
				Zorāwa	..	..	..

* And more than 50 Deacons.

† And 5 Deacons.

‡ And 3 Deacons.

Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.	Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.
<i>District of Walto.</i>				Tarmel	2	0	9
Seerta	1	2	79	Be-Khajij	1	0	4
Shwawootha	1	0	6	Pekbhken	0	0	2
Mátha d' Mart Miriam ..	3	2	60	Châros	2	0	7
Khadiâna	1	2	60	<i>Berwer Siweené.</i>			
Rêshe d' Nahra	1	2	30	Khaldâlânes	1	0	6
<i>Province of Dez.</i>				Kotránes	2	1	24
Golozor	1	0	33	Akhwânes	1	0	15
Soowwa	1	0	14	Shmooneenes	1	0	5
Koorsen	1	0	35	Siweené	1	0	20
Chîrî Châra	1	1	30	Espin	1	0	7
Mâdes	1	0	25	Sallen	1	0	4
Mar Kuriakôs	1	1	2	Goorânes	2	0	9
Akôsé	1	1	14	Karmé	1	0	7
Chooichen	1	0	12	Oret	0	0	3
Be-Shammâsha	1	0	40	<i>Berwer d' Shwawootha.</i>			
Sarâmos	1	0	10	Shwawootha	2	0	12
Rabban dad'Eshoo	1	0	12	Sakerran	4	1	10
Makeeta	1	0	4	Derikki	1	0	4
Alogippa	1	0	0	<i>Bilijnâyé.</i>			
<i>Berwer d' Kochânes.</i>				Darres	1	1	12
Kochânes	2	4*	44 + 6†	Awert	1	0	10
Nerwa	1	0	0	Dâden	1	0	2
Terkônes	4	0	15	Alâs	1	0	2
Keegar	2	0	5				
Soreenos	2	0	7				
					83	81	2,274

* And 16 Deacons.

† The 6 are families temporarily absent.

DIOCESE OF MAR SERGHEES OF JELU.

Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.	Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.
<i>Tehoma.</i>				Samsikki	1	0	25
Gissa	1	4	60	Mátha d'Oriyâyé	1	0	18
Mezraa	2	2	70	Muspéran	1	0	12
Tehoma Gawâya	1	10	240	<i>Province of Bâz.</i>			
Mezraa	1	8	180	Argeb	1	0	50
Goondooktha	1	1*	150	Kojeeja	1	0	39
<i>Province of Jelu.</i>				Mátha Tahteitha	5	1	50
Alsan	1	0	70	Shwawootha	3	2	70
Médhi	0	0	10	Orwantooz	1	1	45
Nahra	1	0	40	<i>District of Rékan.</i>			
Zerêni	2	2	130	Héesh	1	1	15
Mátha d' Mar Zeyya	1	2†	70	Merkânish	2	0	7
Ummôd	0	0	25	Gebba	1	0	3
Talâna	1	0	40	Erbesb	2	1	20
Be-Bokra	0	0	25	Istip	1	1	18
Nerik	2	0	12				
Orl	0	0	10				
Zer	1	1	80				
Sarpei	1	1	40				
Boo Bâwa	1	1	35				
					38	37	1,650

* Many Deacons.

† Village of the Bishop.

DIOCESE OF MAR SLEEWA OF GAWAR.

Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.	Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.
<i>Province of Gawar.</i>				Alamlyyan	1	0	6
Be-Rberri	0	0	12	Kalânes	3	0	20
Zirkânes	1	1	14	<i>Among the Artoosht Koords.</i>			
Ooreesha	1	0	14	Gezna	0	0	Koords
Darâwé	1	0	12	Parrashin	0	0	Des- troyed
Keiat	1	0	15	Kharâban	0	0	Des- troyed
Manoonan	0	1	2	Barwes	0	0	20
Kadeeyyan	0	0	6	<i>District of Lévun.</i>			
Memekkan	1	1	17	Erkl	1	1	25
Seen Awa	1	0	12	Khergel	1	1	15
Khulkhus	1	0	10	Matha d'Oomra	1	2	15
Karpel	1	0	10	Nevgweezan	1	1	30
Gagoran	1	2*	20	Zarânes	0	0	2
Ba-Sherga	1	1	10	Kanoonta	0	0	7
Wezeer Awa	1	1	35	Bellekken	..	..	..
Maken d'Awa	1	2	45	Khandekki	1	1	6
Plr Zalan	1	1	60	Billi	0	0	20
Cardevar	1	2	25	Deira Zengel	1	0	10
Zeezan	1	1†	30	Gohikki	0	0	8
Pa Elan	0	0	5	<i>Noodes.</i>			
Dâra	1	0	5	Marwânan	1	1	24
Pâgel	1	1	30	Oolâma	1	0	20
Serdesht	1	0	4	Tell Gerl	1	0	16
Dizza†	1	1	100	Parkhilan	0	0	12
<i>Derrenaye.</i>				<i>Tcall District.</i>			
Mar Be-Ileshoo	1	3	200	Ba-Dâré	2	1	15
Iyyel	1	1	90	Ba-Ikta	1	0	4
Be-Zekté	1	0	Koords	Be-Koorâyé	1	1	40
Bâsan	1	0	8	Be-Azeeza	1	1	20
<i>Khanânes.</i>				Rabbat	2	1	20
Khanânes Alleitha ..	1	1	40	Talâna	1	1	10
Khanânes Tahteitha ..	1	2	20	Aréwun	1	1	20
Slimoon	1	0	11	Ko	1	1	30
Khaleclaf	0	0	7	Irk	1	1	14
<i>Province of Albak.</i>				Be-Shooka	0	2	20
Hôzé ..	1	1	30	Shâwreza	1	0?	6
Erji	0	0	25	Biyya	1	0	6
Ates	0	0	40	Be-Létha	..	..	..
Menjil Awa	0	0	20				
Kharâlun†	..	..	..				
Shareenes†	0	0	2				
Ozan	1	1	12				
Poosan†	..	..	..				
Boorduk	1	1	23				
					56	43	1,497

* The Bishop's residence.

† The Bishop's village.

‡ The Christian inhabitants are Armenian, but they communicate with Nestorians, and Nestorian priests minister to them all the other ordinances of the Church.

DIOCESE OF MAR KHANESHOO THE METROPOLITAN.

Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.	Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.
Halana	2		100	Jeremah	1		30
Kiatuna	1		100	Bitcari	1		2
Bibabi	1		?	Haki	1		20
Bidiwi	1		24	Baclulan	1		30
Biltunio	1		80	Kordna	1		8
Kustaka Matranes } village	1		25	Shikani	1		12
Bigardi	1		12	Tuteilki	1		15
Sursceri	1		70	Tulu	1		15
Tels	1		30	Anbi	2		50
Mardunkha	1		?	Sehani	0		8
Nerdusha	1		20	Zangillan	1		10
Balkau	0		7	Kaluga	1		10
Harvonan	1		40	Darbant	1		10
Talana	1		6	Saluna	1		2
Doiru	0		?	Rusna	1		10
Kig Perzan	?		?	Disgari	1		20
Darun	1		20	Horana	0		10
Marta	1		5	Pasta	0		8
Sarunis	1		40	Hishmawa	1		7
Devri	1		10	Nargi	0		2
Bautour	1		20	Holuthan	0		6
Gerganai	?		?	Susnawa	0		7
Isera	1		30	Halbe	0		7
Batouti	0		13	Urthera	0		7
Shaput	1		20	Hossar	1		5
Dara	1		4	Kourana	0		6
<i>District of Bradusnai.</i>				Gondigmalla	0		6
Zerua	1		40	Gangachin	0		10
Serun	1		60	Uvasau	1		10
					43		1,067

OROOMIAH.

DIOCESE OF MAR JOHANAN.

Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.	Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.
Gavilan	1	8	44	Karakis	0	0	10
Jamalava	1	0	15	Aabajalovy	1	0	15
Kizlasok	1	1	22	Ikharatch	0	0	12
Balou	1	0	38	Chamakey	1	1	50
Kawala	0	0	18	Yaghmoraghloz	1	0	18
Bozlovy	0	0	8	Zumalan	1	3	44
Haubabakau	0	0	1	Hassar	0	0	5
Karagues	0	0	31	Hassar	0	0	4
Takalovy	0	0	5	Kozl	1	0	38
Chickellui	1	0	14	Nazl	1	1	50
Arduk	2	3	126	Geniza	2	2	26
Mohawa	1	2	88	Badilboo	0	0	5
Marnocha	1	0	5	Picabglovey	0	0	15
Goujalouwi	0	0	6	Hahajabut	0	0	5
Abdilakandi	1	1	52	Zanaloni	1	0	16
Shirabut	1	2	31	Armootaghach	1	1	33
Yangagh	1	1	42				
Karajalu	1	1	80				
					23	22	972

DIOCESE OF MAR JOHNAN.

Partially taken out of the above. The repetitions are marked *.

Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.	Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.
Sipurghon.....	1	1	150	*Abadalakand	..	..	..
Chaneshan.....	0	0	40	*Zumalan	..	..	..
Mushawa.....	1	0	100	*Hassar	..	..	..
*Mar Nocha.....	..	..	..	*Kozl	..	..	..
*Yengijah.....	..	..	..	*Geniza.....	..	..	..
*Karajalu.....	..	..	..	*Chlchaglioni.....	..	..	..
*Abajalovey.....	..	..	..	*Takalovey.....	..	..	..
*Karakis.....	..	..	..	*Ardah.....	..	..	..
*Iklaghach.....	..	..	..				
*Sherabt.....	..	..	..				
					2	1	290

DIOCESE OF MAR GORIEL.

Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.	Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.
Ardishai.....	5	2	160	Dizzar	0	0	18
Takla.....	2	3	90	Vezerawa	1	0	54
Alkal	2	2	32	Kollarachau	0	0	6
Bahari.....	0	0	115	Gulpashan	2	1	160
Serdarut.....	0	0	30	Charagushe	1	1	42
Elazlui.....	0	0	3	Tarmaue	1	0	18
Darbari	0	0	50	Hassar.....	0	0	13
Chidrava	0	0	18	Martaordu.....	1	0	1
Mereshgarl	0	0	18	Karasaulevey	0	0	24
Moradalovey	0	0	30	Tasmurlul	0	0	18
Karalari.....	0	0	21	Irlawa	1	1	100
Kurtapa	1	0	20	Borushau	0	0	14
Sha Nabat.....	0	0	25	Sauger.....	0	0	38
Nazarabut.....	0	0	7	Utchevelari	0	0	100
Kolea	0	0	15	Digala.....	1	1	154
Dizatakia	2	1	154		1	1	70
Balanush	0	0	37	Gulfatalechan.....	0	0	60
Zewick	0	0	16	Charbash	2	5	108
Chidrava	0	0	11	Seuger	0	0	18
Byatlari.....	0	0	6	Seuger	0	0	29
Topozawa	0	0	7	Sunsalovey	0	0	13
Shaftnava.....	1	0	20	Bardikii	0	0	3
Alawa	1	0	22	Martayartulla	0	0	9
Dedan	0	0	11	Badalabut	0	0	12
Saathie	1	0	44	Dizzaragalahey	1	1	30
Chatalovey	0	0	20	Aliawa	2	1	84
Chorimabat	0	0	30	Sery	0	1	27
Tazacant	0	0	7	Mar Sarghes.....	1	0	11
Saralun	0	0	35	Blswagle	0	0	10
Shlmshajian	1	0	38	Hussar	0	0	18
Goktapa.....	1	4	190	Ishniek	1	0	10
Sarebagalovey	0	0	11	Tapa	0	0	10
Surejuk	1	0	10	Gornawa.....	0	0	15
Tutrush	0	1	13	Garnawal Causly	0	0	8
Barhanlovey.....	0	0	13	Chlawa.....	1	1	25
Karagboy.....	1	1	30	Almalek	0	0	5

Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.	Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.
Nakada	1	0	50	Chopul	0	0	8
Carawansara	0	0	6	Deimer	0	0	2
Topuzawa	0	0	6	Douchel	0	0	4
Ochvar	1	0	23	Dourga	0	0	8
Baimkala	0	0	10	Sanjbatu	0	0	10
Barani	0	0	12	Daralek	1	0	30
Racktana	0	0	12	Kozulkobi	0	0	8
Hassaulul	0	0	8	Ajapsher	0	0	8
Orjazawa	0	0	4				
Mametier	1	0	40				
					40	28	2,888

RECAPITULATION.

Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.	Name of Village.	No. of Churches.	No. of Priests.	No. of Nestorian Families.
Diocese of Mar Shi-moon the Patriarch }	88	81	2,274	Diocese of Mar Hnan-Yeshua the Metropolitan and his Suf-fragans }	43	36	1,067
Diocese of Mar Sergh-ees of Jelu }	38	37	1,650	Diocese of Mar Johanan	23	22	972
				Diocese of Mar Johnan	2	1	290
Diocese of Mar Slew-a of Gawar..... }	56	43	1,497	Diocese of Mar Goriel..	40	28	2,888
					290	248	10,638

The European reckoning is five to a family ; but among the Nestorians the married sons of a family often continue to reside in their father's house, and the average number of a family will be more than five. Ainsworth (*Travels in Syria, &c.*) reckons the number at eight; I tested the number in several large groups of my visitors, and should be inclined to put it at seven or eight. - Taking seven as the number, these 10,638 families would give a population of 74,466, exclusive of the "Chaldean" part of the nation.

It will interest some to see, in the following summary of the Dedications of the Churches, who are the popular Saints of the Nestorian calendar, and the degree of their popularity.

THERE ARE CHURCHES DEDICATED TO

Mar Gewerghis (St. George)	63	Mar Daoud	1
Mart Mariam (St. Mary)	61	Serpt Zeruanda	2
Mar Kuriakus	26	Rabban Pithun	1
Mar Yohannan	13	Mar Kanania	1
Mar Moses	2	Mar Mikael	1
Beni Shmooni*	8	Mar Aziza	1
Rabban Yacoub	1	Mar Abdishu	1
Rabban Sada	1	Mar Yusuf	2
Mar Saba	5	Rabban Bar Somuro	1
Mar Shlmoon	9	Mar Thoma	4
Mar Sarapion	1	Mar Be-Isu	1
Mar Burur	1	Mar Karde	1
Mar Isak	1	Mar Talai	1
Mar Ouraham	3	Mar Schoona	2
Mar Nathaniel	1	Mar Isu	1
Kadisbta	1	Mar Od Isu	3
Mar Serghces	5	Mar Heskiel	1
Rabban Maraziz	1	Mar Yohnan	2
Rabban Barburatu	1	Mar Daniel	1
Mar Mari	1	Mar Sor Isu	4
Mar Addi	2	Mar Goriel	3
Mar Shalita	12	Matacha Goriel in Kanania	1
Mar Mastreena	2	Mar Zela	1
Mar Yacoub	2	Petrus Poulis (SS. Peter and Paul)	1
Mar Hanania	1	Mar Aura	1
Mar Stepanus	7	?	16
Mar Siewa	4		

* The sons of Shmoona. They are described as seven in number, who suffered martyrdom with their mother. Their names are given as Yaddai, Machabal, Tirsai, Houroon, Khonsoon, Bachus, Unadou. They are probably the Jewish martyrs recorded in the book of Maccabees. Rufinus, however, in his *Latin Paraphrase on the Book of Josephus*, gives Solomon as the name of the mother, and the names of the sons as Maccabæus, Aber, Machir, Judas, Arhas, Areth, and Jacob.

† Serp in Armenian=Saint.



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